

The Manner of PRAYER

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*To My
Father and Mother*

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PREFACE

WHY WRITE ANOTHER BOOK ON PRAYER? MANY have been written — many good ones, some mediocre, and some misguided. Do books on prayer really help people to pray? Certainly reading books about prayer will not take the place of praying, but such reading may help the Christian to discover his powers in prayer.

This small book is not written to justify prayer in our modern world. The questions of many earnest Christians have forced upon my attention the need for setting forth in simple language the basic principles of Christian prayer. This book is written with the hope that it will help those who feel that they should pray, but do not know how. In a sense that applies to all Christians, and especially to the author. Even Paul wrote, "For we know not what we should pray for as we ought."

The method is not to dispense the pearls of one's own wisdom on the subject, but to study what the Bible, as the English reader knows it, has to say. A rather full study has been made of the New Testament teaching;

the Old Testament has been used less fully. The quotations are usually taken from the Authorized Version, since most English-speaking Christians read that classic translation. In a few instances the American Standard Version is quoted. When neither of these speaks the message of the original language clearly, I shall use my own translation.

Naturally our primary interest in prayer will lie in the field of Jesus' teaching and practice. We have no record that he ever discussed prayer with anyone who did not already believe in it, so we do not know how he would have defended prayer to the skeptic. I have an idea that he would have cited its fruits or demonstrated its power rather than sought a philosophical justification for it. No New Testament writer makes a defense of prayer; it is assumed that all men need to pray. The question is not, Shall we pray? but, How shall we pray?

I wish to express my appreciation to Dean Lewis J. Sherrill for valuable suggestions. My thanks are also due to Mrs. Chamberlain in the revision of the material and for preparing the manuscript for publication.

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LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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*" Lord, teach us to pray, as John also
taught his disciples."*

LUKE 11:1B

INTRODUCTION

"Lord, Teach Us"

THE REQUEST, "LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY," WAS made by a praying man. He was not satisfied merely to pray; he wanted to pray aright. The sergeant who said, "There are no atheists in foxholes," stated a universal truth in very picturesque language. There are no men who do not pray when in mortal danger. This truth was well stated in a newspaper headline: "The Closer You Get to the Front, the More You Pray."¹ At times these prayers are mingled with curses. Someone will ask, "Are such prayers heard by God?" The psalmist spoke of men who "draw near unto the gates of death," who "cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses."² These were men who had "rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the most High."³ The God of grace hears every earnest prayer, regardless of the unworthiness of those who seek his aid. If this were not true, who could pray with the hope of being heard?

The psalmist felt the tragedy of waiting to pray until one is in dire straits. The storm-tossed sailors "reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses." ⁴ This is not as the psalmist would have it. It were far better that men should recognize God before they are at their wit's end. He cried out four times in this one psalm: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" ⁵

God does hear people when they are at their wit's end. The Hebrew text says, "When all their wisdom is swallowed down," i.e., when they are completely baffled and have no resources left within themselves. Prayer is not primarily a cry for help in the midst of desperate need. Christian prayer is a natural part of our friendship with God; it should be as natural as breathing. It is not chiefly a cry of despair or fear; frequently it is joyful and thankful: "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." ⁶ There is nothing that gives a lift to life like praising God. It does something within us that nothing else can do. We miss so much of the meaning and joy of life, if we neglect prayer until we are in some extremity.

A recent religious book has a chapter entitled, "Can the Modern Man Pray?" The chapter closes with the question, "Can the modern man afford not to pray?"⁷ The need is not that prayer should become more universal. Prayer is as old as history and as universal as the race. The devotees of all religions pray, some of them more methodically and diligently than many Christians. Prayer is a necessary part of human existence. The psalmist wrote, "I am a prayer."⁸ Our very nature constitutes a prayer to God. We have lacks and longings that none other can satisfy.

The need of the hour is that Christians should pray more frequently, more intelligently, and less selfishly. This has always been a fundamental need of the Church. When a certain disciple said to Jesus, "Lord, teach us to pray," he was voicing a sense of need which becomes more acute as one grows in character and spiritual insight. It was not that the disciples did not know how to pray. They were all praying men, but they wanted to know how to pray better.

It is an arresting thought that the Gospels do not record that the disciples ever asked Jesus to teach them on any other subject than prayer. This is suggestive of the supreme importance which they attached to prayer. They sensed a power in Jesus' prayer life which made him master of every situation around him and

every emotion within. They yearned to know the secret.

The Lord's Prayer was given as a model by which they were to shape their own praying, not as a formula to relieve them of the mental and spiritual effort of framing their own prayers. We shall examine this model prayer, in the form in which it occurs in the Authorized Version of the Gospel of Matthew because of its greater familiarity, to see what Jesus would teach us about prayer.

The concluding asseveration of faith, "For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever," does not occur in the oldest and best manuscript copies of Matthew. The earliest forms which do occur differ greatly from each other, some longer and some shorter than that in the Authorized Version. These facts led the Revisers to place this doxology in the margin of the American Standard Version. Luke omits it entirely. The evidence suggests that the doxology was added after the Church began to use the prayer liturgically. Since the addition is thoroughly in harmony with the point of view of the prayer itself, and with the New Testament as a whole, we shall consider also its bearing on prayer. A sound spiritual insight guided the Church in selecting it, so we shall make no mistake in following the Church's lead.

"Our Father which art in heaven."

MATT. 6:9A

CHAPTER I

"Our Father"

THE CHRISTIAN PRAYS AS A MEMBER OF A FAMILY. This means, among other things, that he must be conscious of the rights, aspirations, and needs of the other members, if his prayer is to be fully Christian. The Pharisee outraged the first principles of prayer when he said, "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are."¹ Pride in his holy isolation prompted him to find a certain satisfaction in the sins of other men; they made his own shining virtues more conspicuous. Such a spirit is the exact reverse of the Christian attitude. Love for one's neighbor, the second great Commandment for both Jew and Christian, "rejoiceth not in iniquity,"² even when it serves as a dark background to set forth in clearer light one's own good points. More often than we realize, we compare ourselves with Bill Jones or John Smith in this spirit.

The Christian attitude toward the sins of others was exhibited by Paul in his correspondence with the tur-

bulent Corinthian Church. Some of its members had made grievous accusations against his character, motives, and conduct. Had they continued in their unworthy way, Paul would have been even more completely vindicated, but personal vindication was not his chief objective. He wanted them to do the right thing regardless of how he appeared as a consequence: "Now I pray to God that ye do no evil; not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is honest [noble], though we be [appear] as reprobates. For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. For we are glad, when we are weak, and ye are strong: and this also we wish, even your perfection." ³

Paul, the Pharisee, had learned to pray as a Christian. I wonder how often you and I pray as Pharisees! When one finds comfort in the blackness of the other sheep, one becomes unfit to pray, "Our Father," for one has already outraged the spirit of brotherhood. The only appropriate prayer then is, "God be merciful to me a ⁴ sinner." ⁵ A true member of the family of God feels a profound shame at the failure of other Christians, recognizing that but for the grace of God "their sins" might be "my sins."

Peter apparently knew some Christian men who

treated their wives in such a manner that their (the husbands') prayers were hindered.⁶ What Peter had in mind, it is needless to inquire; there are a thousand ways in which we can unfit ourselves to pray by lack of consideration for others. Jesus said that any injustice to one's fellow man unfits one for worship: "Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."⁷ In this context, Jesus had been speaking of a contemptuous attitude toward others, but by this saying he universalized the offense. Any act that shows disregard for another hinders worship: Injustices must be removed before prayer will be heard.

In this teaching, Jesus was re-emphasizing the best insights of the prophets. Isaiah will suffice as a witness: "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. . . . And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood."⁸

The principle that applies to the individual applies also to the nations. How often the "backward races" have been treated in such a manner as to hinder the prayers of the Christian nations, and to hinder the "heathen Chinese" from becoming a Christian! This concerns the individual Christian; we cannot keep silent in the presence of injustice and be prepared to worship.

Not only is this of fundamental importance in our religious life, but it is of crucial importance in the reconstruction of our world. In the words of Paul, Christ's purpose was to create "in himself of the twain [Jew and Gentile] one new man thereby making peace." ⁹ Christians throughout the world were to become one *new man*, alike in character and ideals and equal in rights. This is the point of praying as members of a family: justice and peace between the members. It is idle to talk about peace between individuals, classes, or nations, as long as some claim an inherent right to all the cream and sweetmeats of life. If professing Christians had the true spirit of brotherhood, wars would cease unto the ends of the earth. With what a voice of authority the Church could then speak!

According to Jesus, the first requisite for Christian

prayer is the recognition of the family bond, in deed as well as in creed.

The concept of the family of God widens in concentric circles as the Biblical account unfolds. As it widens, it deepens. In the Old Testament, we read of a covenant people who stand in a peculiar relation to God: first a man, then a family, a clan, and a nation. Participation in the common privileges was determined by blood and sealed by the rite of circumcision. In the New Testament, the horizon widens to include all mankind,¹⁰ and the more intimate figure of the family is used to describe the relations of the members to each other and to God the Father.

In the Old Testament, the term "brother" practically always referred to a blood relationship. In the Gospels, this word refers to a physical kinship in every instance but one.¹¹ In this one case, Jesus introduced the idea of character and conduct, doing "the will of my Father which is in heaven," as the bond of kinship. The disciples quickly caught the significance of this new idea, for in the rest of the New Testament the word "brother" is used almost exclusively, fifty-five out of sixty-two times, in this spiritual sense.

In the Old Testament, the great word to express community of interest and responsibility is "neigh-

bour.”¹² In the New Testament, this word has a very restricted use. Of the three Greek words translated neighbor, two occur a total of only five times referring to proximity of residence, so they have no significance for our study. The third occurs sixteen times. Twelve instances are quotations of or allusions to the second great Commandment: “Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself”; two more are probable references to it; and the other two come out of an Old Testament background. Therefore we might say that except for direct Old Testament influence, the figure of neighbor has been replaced in the New by the idea of brotherhood. The community has become the family.

The basic principle, however, is the same in each case: Mutual respect, consideration, and affection bind together all members of the community or the family. It is very significant that this saying about the meaning of neighborliness¹³ should be quoted in the New Testament more frequently than any other Old Testament passage. A new emphasis was introduced into religion, and when Jesus taught us to begin our prayers with, “Our Father,” he was reminding us of its importance.

Jesus introduced the subject of neighborliness into his teaching to correct a rabbinical perversion of the

Old Testament. He said, "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies."¹⁴ The rabbinical "improvement" met the desires of frail humanity in two ways. First, it did not set any standard, as did the Old Testament, by which we should test our love for our neighbors: Any degree of sentimentality would do. Secondly, it encouraged the venting of one's spleen on those whom one might not like, quite a convenience for unregenerate human nature.

Six times Jesus used the formula, "Ye have heard that it hath been said."¹⁵ He was saying to his generation, "There is too much hearsay in your religion; return to the sources for your knowledge of religion; I am presenting you a new authority, my own words." There is still a tragic amount of hearsay in religion. Many Christians apparently never read their Bible, but depend for all their religious knowledge on what they hear in a sermon or in some casual contact. Frequently one is amazed at what one is told is in the Bible: "In the Bible it says . . ." The supposedly Biblical quotation may be a revised version of Shakespeare or a misquotation of the *Rubáiyát* of Omar Khayyám.

There is a desperate need for the Church to return

to its Bible. Hosts of Christians are spiritual illiterates. The spiritual life of the Church cannot become what it should be until we become a Bible-reading Church. On no subject is there greater need for clarification than on what the New Testament teaches about the family of God. We commonly allude to it under the term "the Fatherhood of God." Too much preaching on this subject is of the hearsay type: The preacher depends on what someone has said about the Bible, instead of studying the Bible to see what it says. Probably nowhere is a reform in preaching more urgently needed than just here. The sermon should have at least a speaking acquaintance with the text. Dr. A. T. Robertson used to say, "The greatest proof that the Bible is inspired is that it has stood so much bad preaching." ¹⁶

The New Testament is very clear and definite on the family of God: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God"; ¹⁷ "But as many as received him, to them gave he the power [right] ¹⁸ to become the sons of God"; ¹⁹ "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother." ²⁰ According to the New Testament, Jesus, John, and Paul saw eye to eye in this matter: sonship implies

moral resemblance, doing the will of the Father; moral resemblance to God is produced under the leadership of his Spirit; those who are led by his Spirit are they who have received his Son.

Most of the controversy on this subject has arisen out of a failure to appreciate the implications of the phrase "son of God." Some have said that the "Churchy type" are merely self-righteous when they hold that all men are not sons of God. We must remember that such phrases are due to Hebrew or Aramaic idioms literally translated into English. The New Testament frequently uses analogous expressions. A son of peace²¹ is a peaceful man; a son of perdition²² is a lost man; a son of God is a godly man. Jesus did not hold that all men, in their natural state, qualify as godly men. In fact, he said to certain men, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."²³ Either Jesus was mistaken or the New Testament incorrectly reports him, if all men are the sons of God. If either is true, we should find a better authority in religion.

But what about those whom the Bible does not call

the sons of God? They are our particular objects of concern; we as Christians are to pray for them that despitefully use us and persecute us: "That ye may be the children of your Father in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust." ²⁴ The best way to make a non-Christian want to be a Christian is to act like a Christian in your dealing with him.

Out of the back of my memory comes a story that I read long ago which illustrates the point. In one of the massacres of the Armenians, a Turkish soldier killed the brother of an Armenian girl. She escaped by leaping over a wall. Later she became a nurse. One day on her hospital rounds she found a wounded Turkish soldier very near death. She recognized him. A little neglect would have ended his life, but she applied her skill assiduously. After days of careful nursing, the soldier regained consciousness. At once he recognized his nurse as the sister of the man he had killed. He asked her why she had nursed him so carefully when she knew that he had killed her brother. The nurse replied, "I have a religion that teaches me to do good to those who persecute me." The soldier was silent for a while and then said, "I never knew that there was a religion like that."

Paul was especially sensitive in the matter of how the Christian dealt with the non-Christian. To the Colossians, he wrote, "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time,"²⁵ i.e., be very wise in dealing with the non-Christian; use the opportunity well to make him a brother in Christ. In like manner, the Thessalonians were told to "walk honestly toward them that are without."²⁶ The Christian has a responsibility toward the non-Christian which he must fulfill before he can pray aright. The Christian cannot circumscribe his brotherly deeds by race, nation, denomination, or even by the whole Christian brotherhood.

This principle is universal for the Christian, who has "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him: where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all."²⁷

We are not prepared to pray as Christians until we recognize Christians of all races as our brothers and sisters in Christ. This means that they are to receive our full respect and affection. Their dignity and worth are in no sense affected by the color of their skin.

The direction of prayer is as important as the spirit

of prayer. Jesus taught that prayer should be addressed to God the Father rather than to himself: "And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you."²⁸ There is untold tragedy in the number of prayers that have been addressed to images, to angels, to saints, and even to demons. The resulting heart hunger, perverted morals, and fear of the unknown have blighted the lives of many peoples for centuries. Correcting misguided praying is an urgent task today.

When the Christian prays, he talks to God as a child to his father. It would be a strange child who talked to his father only when in trouble. The normal child runs gladly to meet his father when he comes home from the day's work; he throws his chubby arms about his father's neck and tells him about all the doings of the day. There should be something of this glad going to meet God in the Christian's life. "Getting acquainted with God is not vastly different from getting acquainted with people."²⁹ How many of us Christians can say that we are really acquainted with God, even though we are his children? This relation should not stop with acquaintance; it should issue in companionship, friendship. "Time and deepening in-

terest are required to change acquaintance into friendship." ³⁰

It would be a rude child who insisted on doing all the talking; the father might have something more important to say than the child. Christians sometimes make the mistake of talking too much as they pray. What God has to say to us is infinitely more important than what we have to say to him. Jesus frequently warned against too much talk in our prayers.³¹ The fine art of listening for God to speak should be cultivated. This is a vital part of prayer.

There are myriads of ways to listen to God. He speaks to some through the song of the wood thrush, the scent of the wild-grape blossom, the majesty of a tree, the energy of the sea. He spoke to the psalmist through the glory of the heavens. But God also has a more definite word for man than these things can convey. Of old he spoke through prophet and psalmist, and in the fullness of time through his Son. God still speaks to his people by means of the life and words of the prophets, the psalmists, the Saviour, and the apostles.

A most excellent way to listen to God is to take some word of Jesus and hold it before the mind. Turn it round and round, looking at all the facets of its truth. Look at what leads up to it and what follows, and it

will glow with new meaning. This close examination will never exhaust its meaning or reduce its freshness. Take, for instance, Jesus' words, "Our Father." Frequent repetition has worn them smooth only for those who have not thought long and seriously upon them. The wonder of man's addressing the Creator by the familiar term "Father" grows as one meditates upon it. After more than threescore years of thought on this great theme, the apostle of love exclaimed, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God"! ³² As he held before his mind the love of God, he became aware that it was an otherworldly love. There is nothing like it on land or sea, and nothing like it in the heart of man apart from the work of God's Spirit. The mood of wonder and adoration prepares one to hear God when he speaks.

Another good way to listen for God to speak is to select some pictorial narrative from the life of Jesus and think oneself into the situation, for example, the scene in Gethsemane. Ask yourself: Who were there? What thoughts ran through the minds of these men on that night? Why were they sleepy? How did Jesus feel about their sleeping while he agonized? Why did Jesus go through all this? What would have happened

to me if I had been there? Would I have gone a little farther into the garden with him? Do I fail him in crucial situations? The variety of questions which could be asked is infinite, and if wisely asked they will probe the secret motives of your soul. God will certainly have something to say before you are through and you will hear.

One might in time go through the entire Gospel narrative in this manner. Each situation will throb with meaning. Suppose we take the story of the feeding of the five thousand: Who were these people? How many of them were poor and hard-pressed by life? How many were frustrated and weary? How many had been hungry before? How does Jesus feel about hungry people? Is there anything that he would have me do about the hungers of the world?

The advantage in using Biblical materials in this manner is that we avoid the extremes of autosuggestion in listening. The wishes already in our own minds will not rise so readily to misdirect praying. God will have an opportunity to set the course for our aspiring and striving before our prejudices and desires take control. Sometimes he will rebuke our baseness or smugness; sometimes he will speak peace and assurance. It is extremely unlikely that he will ever be silent.

This Father to whom we talk in prayer, not only knows our needs, but he anticipates them.³³ As a wise human father plans for the life of his child before it is born, so God the Father has planned for all his children. A primary purpose of prayer is to discover what this plan is. That is why it is so important to listen as well as talk when we pray.

The superiority of God to other fathers is suggested by the phrase "in heaven." This Father does not have the limitations so characteristic of earthly parents: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?"³⁴ Not only is he willing, but he is infinitely "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."³⁵ The Father of the Christian family eagerly meets the erring child to forgive.³⁶ He even seeks out men that they may become his children.³⁷ We are not prepared to pray to a God like this until we have something of his attitude.

The regulating principle of this family is love rather than obedience. In the New Testament, Christians are never commanded to "obey" God. This does not mean that the obligation to obey God is less absolute under the Gospel than under the Law. There is a change in

emphasis. Jesus' teachings are full of commands, but they are usually commands to love: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."³⁸ Although both these commands were in the Old Testament, attention was not strongly focused upon them. Jesus made them its vital center: "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."³⁹

Jesus also said, "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you."⁴⁰ He was correcting the rabbinical perversion: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy."⁴¹ The command, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect"⁴² requires us to love those who do not return our love.⁴³ To his followers, Jesus said, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, as I have loved you."⁴⁴ He loved his own enough to lay down his life for them, and this is the standard he sets for those who would be called his friends. Love does not involve the condoning of sin; it seeks the redemption of the sinner. At times love must punish drastically.

Jesus left no room for supposing that love, as the regulating principle of the Christian community, would reduce the requirements of obedience: "If ye love me, ye *will* keep my commandments."⁴⁵ The demand for obedience is still absolute, but the motive is love rather than fear. In rabbinical piety, obedience to the Law and to God its Author tended to become an end in itself. There was consequently little gladness and much self-righteousness in Pharisaism. Christian obedience should arise out of love for God and will therefore be joyous.

As love is designed to govern all relations between God and man, so is it also to solve all problems between man and man. Until we see this, we cannot pray as real Christians, and the wounds of our world will not be healed.

Our Father, enable us to be worthy members of thy family!

"Hallowed be thy name."

MATT. 6:9B

CHAPTER II

"Hallowed Be Thy Name"

ACCORDING TO JESUS, THE FIRST DESIRE OF THE Christian should be that God's holiness be recognized. Many Christians apparently never think of this when praying. How often we begin our prayers with what *we* want! Jesus said that we should begin with what God is. Before we make our requests, we should pray that mankind in general and ourselves in particular may come to appreciate God's holiness. We usually put "the cart before the horse" and some of us never get the cart and the horse together. Is that why so much of our praying does not seem really to matter?

Before going farther we ought to inquire, "What does it mean to hallow the name of God?" The basic idea, both in the Old Testament and in the New, is that of "separateness." Anything set apart from others of its class was called "holy." It could be set apart for an evil purpose or a good. There are traces of the former usage in the Old Testament. Among the Ca-

naanites, both men and women were set apart as temple prostitutes. This practice was sternly forbidden to the Hebrews.¹ It was the character of God which gave to that set apart for him the attribute of holiness as consisting in purity.

In the Old Testament, great stress was placed on the holiness of places, of days, of some men, and of certain things² which were consecrated or dedicated to God. The next most frequent use of the word "holy" referred to God himself.³ It was the fixed conviction of the noblest minds of Israel that God must be set apart in their thinking: as Creator from his creation, as the living God from false gods, and as the righteous One in contrast to sinful man. For this reason God's name was to be spoken only in reverence: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain."⁴

The "name" represents what is known of God to men. He is holy in his own nature, regardless of how men feel about it or what they know about it. There is nothing that men can do to stain the character of God, although they may tarnish his glory: "For the name of God is blasphemed" because of the inconsistencies of his people. To hallow his name is to ac-

knowledge, to reflect, and to proclaim his holiness. Mankind rather than God is the loser when God's name is not hallowed.

The Old Testament usage that leads most directly over into the New is concerned with the implications of God's character for his people: "For I am the Lord your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy: . . . For I am the Lord that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy." ⁵

In the New Testament, holiness became almost exclusively a matter of personal character. The word-family to which "hallow" and "holiness" belong has also words translated "sanctify," "sanctification," and "saint." In the New Testament, *things* and *places* are never "sanctified" except where there is an Old Testament background. The saints are never people who have been translated into the next world; they are flesh-and-blood men and women whom God has called, cleansed, and consecrated to a new way of life. The New Testament does not claim that these people are perfect, but that they are dedicated to God. Paul specifically denied that he had reached a state of perfection: "Not as though I had already attained, either

were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.”⁶ John added, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves [our neighbors see through us], and the truth is not in us.”⁷ Only the self-deceived thank God that they are not as others are, and set all others at nought. It is ignorance of God’s holiness which makes such self-deception possible.

Our world has lost its sense of sin, because it has lost its sense of God’s holiness. This is inevitably followed by new outbursts of sin. The world is reaping a bitter harvest today from its own evil-doing. Our one hope is to rediscover the holiness of God — or have we ever really discovered it? Between God and the noblest of men there is an awful moral and spiritual chasm, and yet, in his love and providence, he is closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet. It is the sense of this awesome gap between the character of God and our own characters that leads to worship. In the presence of the thrice holy God, we instinctively cry, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.”⁸ Worship begins in awe and wonder, then advances to praise and thanksgiving. We wonder at the

grace of God who has redeemed us and are moved to praise and thanksgiving for his mercy.

One cannot examine the teachings of Jesus and feel that he placed first the petition, "Hallowed be thy name," by mere chance. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, he made it quite clear that smugness and complacency make true prayer impossible. The Pharisee "struck a pose and prayed thus to himself" (not to God), and therefore did not truly pray. The defect in all religion that knows not the holiness of God is its self-righteousness. Jesus would have no dealings with such religion: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners."⁹ This does not mean that Jesus wanted only rascals in his Kingdom. It does mean, however, that he can do more with an honest sinner than with a self-righteous zealot. Nothing makes one honest about his sins like a sense of the holiness of God.

Paul also bore witness to the tragedy of a defective sense of God's righteousness. Of his own people he said: "For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God."¹⁰ This is Paul's résumé of the national tragedy of Israel. His

people had made the name of God, Yahweh, too holy for utterance, but they never understood the implications of God's holiness for their own living. This tragedy is all the more poignant for Paul, because before his conversion he had made the same mistake himself.

One may be very religious, and pray with great fervor and frequency, and at the same time be very far from Christian prayer. A sense of the holiness of God gives the proper direction and proper attitude to our prayer. Without it, prayer assumes many unwholesome forms. Misguided prayer is only prevented by starting with what God is, not with what we want. When one realizes the utter holiness of God, one's "askings" are drastically affected.

Our chief difficulty lies in grasping God's holiness. Mankind has found it comparatively easy to think of God in terms of power, wrath, or glory. When man, unaided by revelation, imagined God, to some he became the storm-god, using his power capriciously, since man himself tends to caprice in the use of power; to others, he became the God of wrath, since man tends to become vindictive when dealing with the evildoer. Yet others have been impressed with his glory as written in the heavens. Jesus, however, would have us dwell rather upon his holiness when we pray. We need this

emphasis to purify our motives as we approach God. It is extremely difficult to keep from thinking of God in terms of ourselves. When the Greeks magnified themselves to create their gods, they included their own vices as well as their virtues, so their gods were quarrelsome, incestuous, and petty. The first petition of the Lord's Prayer is that we may separate God from ourselves in our thinking in order that we may see him as he is. Otherwise we cannot pray as we ought.

It is necessary to attain some degree of holiness before God becomes real to us. The pure in heart see God, but the evil fear him, and would avoid him. There can be no true fellowship between righteousness and unrighteousness, nor communion between light and darkness. Until we are impressed with God's holiness and begin to long for holiness ourselves, there is little to be gained by routine praying. The hunger for holiness, however, can be satisfied, for the Saviour said, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."¹¹

The Christian is made "holy," set apart, by a co-operative work, both human and divine. Paul urged the Philippians to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling: "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."¹² The

completion of the Christian's salvation is made possible because God supplies the "energy" of will and action necessary to that end. The goal is the "perfect man," who has attained "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."¹³ In other words, the end of salvation is Christlike character, therefore the Christian is to pursue holiness "without which no man shall see the Lord."¹⁴ The Authorized Version translates this verse to "follow" peace and sanctification. This suggests that it may be enough to follow afar off. A better translation would be that we are to "pursue," as in a chase, with the intention of overtaking.

The three Persons of the Trinity are represented as united in this sanctifying work. God the Father sanctifies the Christian: "And the God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray that your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus."¹⁵ Paul believed confidently that, when God begins "a good work in you," he will continue perfecting it "until the day of Jesus Christ."¹⁶ Paul seemed to assume that it will take God until the day of Christ's final triumph to finish his work in the life of the Christian, so in this life it will always be appropriate for us to pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner." May I repeat: Without a sense of the dif-

ference between our character and God's, we cannot pray acceptably.

Not only does God sanctify his people, but he also "sanctified, and sent into the world" his Son;¹⁷ that is, God dedicated his Son to his mission to redeem mankind. The Son also dedicated himself to this task: "As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth."¹⁸ The Christian, as well as the Christ, has a mission, and each must be dedicated to his own mission.

Christ's purpose in sanctifying the Church is "that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."¹⁹ The work of Christ goes infinitely deeper than the Old Testament sanctification. It is not "by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once [for all] into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, . . . sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge [cleanse] your conscience from dead works to

serve the living God? ” ²⁰ Here we have the eternal and elemental difference between the sacramental “ sanctifying ” of the flesh and the cleansing of the conscience. Through eternal Spirit man’s moral nature is renovated; the “ dead works ” of religious ritual no longer tyrannize over the conscience. He is now prepared to serve the Living God.

The Spirit is also spoken of as an agent in renewing those who are set aside: “ But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken [make alive] your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.” ²¹ This making alive is an act of God in preparation for the sanctifying work of the Spirit. When the new life has been imparted, man can then co-operate with God in his own sanctification. It is God, however, who makes all this possible. Therefore “ we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth.” ²²

The instrumentality used in sanctifying the Christian is the truth which Jesus defined as “ thy word.” The Christian must have correct information about God before he can advance far in holiness of charac-

ter. Zeal without knowledge is always dangerous and often disastrous. The hope of the Church, as well as of the individual, lies in its fidelity to the truth as it is revealed in Christ Jesus. That truth stresses the infinite holiness of God and the spiritual poverty of man. Before we can become like God, we must realize how utterly we are different from him in our moral character. Only then can we truly pray, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me."²³ Then we are prepared to "pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification apart from which no man shall see the Lord."²⁴

When we have become aware, to some extent at least, of God's holiness, we are ready to say, "Give me." We will also feel constrained to say, "Forgive me, lead me, deliver me." It is impossible to pray honestly, "Thy will be done," until we have some inkling of the holiness of that will. When we hallow his name we are ready for the next step in prayer.

O God, give to us at least a glimpse of thy holiness!

*"Thy kingdom come. Thy will be
done in earth, as it is in heaven."*

MATT. 6:10

CHAPTER III

"Thy Kingdom Come"

AFTER GOD'S HOLINESS HAS BEEN ACKNOWLEDGED, the next step in prayer is the recognition of his authority, the authority of character as well as of power. In recent years, there has been much discussion about the source of authority in religion. For Jesus, this apparently was not a problem, even in Gethsemane.

The petition, "Thy kingdom come," is immediately defined by "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." This literary device in Hebrew poetry is known as parallelism. The Book of Psalms furnishes a great variety of these parallels. They may embody contrasting, supplementary, or synonymous truths. In this case the petitions are synonymous. The coming of the Kingdom of God is the doing of God's will on earth as it is done in heaven.

Jesus laid great stress on *doing* the will of God. In this he was followed by virtually all the New Testament writers. This is exceedingly important, for the

essence of sin consists in seeking our own rather than God's will. In many ways we try to usurp God's prerogatives: so Paul wrote, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves . . . for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord";¹ and again, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able [mighty] to make him stand."² A readiness to invade God's domain lies very deep in our minds, below the threshold of our own awareness. It comes to the surface in various offensive forms until the mind of the flesh is changed into the mind of Christ. This change in the deepest sense is the meaning of reconciliation. "Thy will be done" reminds us that God's will is not yet our will. It becomes ours by the work of the Spirit.

"Breathe on me, Breath of God,
Until my heart is pure,
Until with Thee I will one will,
To do and to endure."³

Some people talk about prayer in a manner to suggest that they have never become aware of the sin of invading God's responsibility. Now and then one hears

prayers marked by an easy familiarity with a god who fits neatly into plans someone has already laid. This smacks of magic. Magic seeks to change the will of the god, to use him; prayer seeks to discover and follow the will of God, to serve him. Here lies an essential difference between paganism and Christianity.

Doing the will of God opens our eyes and God's ears. The mere willingness to do God's will clarifies our mental and spiritual vision, so that we understand Jesus' teaching for what it is, a message from God.⁴ According to the man born blind, God's hearing our prayers is conditioned on our attitude toward his will: "Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth."⁵ It was the faith of the Church "that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us."⁶

According to Jesus, entrance into the Kingdom is conditioned on doing the will of God, not merely on confessing the Lordship of Christ: "Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."⁷ Saying, "I go, sir," and then turning aside to something else, is not doing the will of God.⁸ One must *go* and *work* in his vineyard. This plain teaching of Jesus has sometimes been set

aside for a perversion of the Pauline doctrine of the grace of God. Paul would stoutly repudiate any interpretation of his teaching which makes a mere verbal profession of faith in Christ a means of acceptance. For Paul, faith was a dynamic, driving power which transformed all of life and set a man doing the will of God.

Jesus, as we have noted before, conditioned membership in the family of God on doing the will of God. Doing his will opens doors of opportunity, but knowing and not doing brings very great guilt.⁹ His will is to be done "from the soul,"¹⁰ i.e., from the very core of the Christian's being. Doing the will of God has in it the germs of eternal life: "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever."¹¹

The importance of doing the will of God caused Paul to pray for the Colossians that they "might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord, unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."¹² He wanted them to stand "as matured men fully assured"¹³ of all the will of God. There must be no uncertainty, no vacillating.

How can one know the will of God? In many matters it is easy to know his will, but in some situations it is very difficult. Paul, for example, was perfectly assured that his call as an apostle and his mission to the Gentiles were according to the will of God, but in the details of life the will of God sometimes crossed his own plans. Then Paul had to change his direction.¹⁴ After a long and rich experience in seeking the will of God, he found the way: presenting the body "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove [discover by test] what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."¹⁵ Complete devotion to God leads to a discovery of his will. One must resist the pressure group, called the world, and be transformed by the renewed mind. Consecration to God and separation from the world are necessary before we can know the will of God as we must to live as we should.

The end and aim of Christian perfecting is doing the will of God.¹⁶ The New Testament writers had caught the significance of Jesus' teaching on this, so they placed great emphasis upon it. Jesus applied his teachings to himself also. In the crisis of Gethsemane, he

prayed, "Thy will be done."¹⁷ This was the natural fruition of his attitude toward his mission: "For I came from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."¹⁸ The ignominy and suffering of the cross could not turn him back.

According to the writer of Hebrews, Jesus' life was a sacramental mission of doing God's will.¹⁹ God took no pleasure in burnt offerings and offerings for sin; he desired the sacrifice of obedience. Jesus, however, never spoke of his obedience as a sacrifice. He called it his meat and drink. He was often too busy to eat. His family construed this as a little crazy.²⁰ On another occasion, his disciples "prayed him, . . . Master eat. But he said unto them, I have meat to eat that ye know not of. Therefore said his disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."²¹

A short while before, the Saviour, in asking for a drink of water, had discovered a thirsty soul. He did not get the drink from Jacob's well, but he satisfied a deeper thirst by giving the living water to the Samaritan woman. When the village turned out to see and hear him, his "meat" was to minister to them.

If the mission of the Christ was to do the will of

God, why is that not also the mission of the Christian? Is that what Jesus meant when he said, " But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness " ? ²² It is not enough to pray that others do the will of God; the prayer applies first to the pray-er. This prayer, however, is an empty form unless we set about doing all of his will that we know. We have no promise that a half-hearted doing of his will supplies any meat and drink for the soul.

Why did Jesus immediately explain the petition, " Thy kingdom come " ? A close study of the New Testament suggests that he intended to correct some of the current ideas about the Kingdom.

Membership in the Kingdom was on a different basis from that popularly supposed. The Kingdom belongs to the poor in spirit ²³ and to those persecuted for righteousness' sake, ²⁴ not to the professionally pious, ²⁵ not to the influential, ²⁶ nor to the rich. ²⁷ Even the publicans and harlots will go into the Kingdom ²⁸ before those who trust in themselves that they are righteous and belittle all others. ²⁹ Those who have gloried in their racial heritage and privileges, but have shirked their obligations, will be rejected, and the Kingdom given to the underprivileged: " And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east and the west, and shall sit

down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven. But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”³⁰ These were not welcome words for those who waited for the Kingdom to drop into their laps with no questions asked. It was inevitable that the Kingdom should suffer violence and that men of violence should attempt to keep it in line with their purposes.³¹ Golgotha represented their efforts to keep the Kingdom in line. They needed to have the Kingdom defined as the doing of God’s will.

The acid test of one’s fitness to receive the Kingdom was and is “bringing forth the fruits thereof.”³² This may consist in doing only the little things for the humble folk of the world: “Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. . . . Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”³³

Jesus usually associated “healing every sickness and every disease among the people” with the preaching

of " the gospel of the kingdom." ³⁴ This was a new interpretation of the promise, " Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; and thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." ³⁵ For a Messiah who would break the heathen with a " rod of iron," he substituted one who would " heal the broken-hearted." ³⁶

The popular expectation was that the Kingdom would come like a thunderclap by divine intervention or by a military coup; he taught that it would come by a process of growth: like the seed growing in a field; ³⁷ like the mustard seed, tiny in its beginning but great in its growth; ³⁸ like leaven permeating a lump of dough until all was changed. ³⁹ An accompaniment of its coming would be the healing of the sick, ⁴⁰ not the cataclysmic destruction of the foe. He does teach that there will be judgment of those who reject, but this is a consequence of their rejection and not a preparation for the Kingdom. It will come in spite of them; they have simply lost their opportunity. ⁴¹

The Kingdom is totalitarian; it takes all a man has. The man who discovered the Kingdom like a treasure hid in a field had to sell *all* that he had to possess it. ⁴²

The merchant in quest of goodly pearls had to sell *all* that he had to possess the pearl of great price.⁴³ When we pray, "Thy will be done," we acknowledge that our religion is a totalitarian faith. Not only does it require our all, but it demands that we be alert⁴⁴ and about our Father's business.⁴⁵ Someone has said, "It does not take much of a man to be a Christian, but it takes all of him."

Jesus also corrected the popular notions about the time of the coming of the Kingdom. The parables of the Ten Virgins, the Talents, and the Pounds taught that there would be delay in its coming. There is a rebuke to pious prying into the timetable of the Kingdom in his words: "The kingdom of God cometh not with observation."⁴⁶ In the postresurrection scene, where Jesus talked with his disciples about "the things pertaining to the kingdom of God,"⁴⁷ their minds ran immediately to the timetable: "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?"⁴⁸ Note that they wanted the Kingdom restored to Israel rather than to God. He replied, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power [authority]."⁴⁹ He had another task for them: "But ye shall receive power [dy-

namic], after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."⁵⁰ We are not to meddle in God's timetable, but are to tell what he has done for man in Christ Jesus. At times one wonders if there has not been too much pious prying into things that are not our business.

The Kingdom is a Kingdom of grace, but the recipient of grace must also be gracious.⁵¹ There is no such thing as arbitrary grace bestowed upon the unresponsive. When God separates us to himself as an act of grace, we become gracious, or we are not yet separated from the world and its ways.

This suggests another corrective found in the New Testament. In the first three Gospels, the Kingdom is mentioned more than one hundred times, but in thirteen Pauline letters it is mentioned only thirteen times. Does this indicate that Paul had a lack of interest in the Kingdom? No, he used another figure of speech. Jesus defined the coming of the Kingdom as doing the will of the Father; Paul substituted the term the righteousness of God⁵² for the Kingdom of God. He used the word righteousness about sixty times; the Synoptic

Gospels used it only eight. This shift of emphasis appears in all the other New Testament books: Those lying nearest to a Judaistic background speak much of the Kingdom of God; those representing the seasoned thought of the apostles on the teachings of Jesus talk more about righteousness.

There is a reason for this change of emphasis. It is easy to talk much about the Kingdom of God and, like Nicodemus, be prepared neither to enter it nor to understand it. It is easy to pray, "Thy kingdom come," but by our actions add, "But not now." When Jesus added the explanatory note, "Thy will be done," he reminded those who were ready to leap on the band wagon and shout for the Kingdom that the Kingdom had implications very personal for each of them: They must face God's will in every aspect of life — their speech, their actions, their ambitions, their aspirations.

Although Paul said little about the Kingdom, what he did say was illuminating: "The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." ⁵³ The Kingdom is not a matter of ritual, ascetic practices, or religious forms, but righteousness [doing God's will] with the consequent peace and joy.

Do not pray, "Thy kingdom come," lightly, for this prayer implies that you surrender everything to God. It is, however, the only way to true freedom.

O God, enable us to seek and find thy will for our everyday life, and then to do it from the heart.

"Give us this day our daily bread."

MATT. 6:11

CHAPTER IV

"Give Us"

ALL LIFE IS A PETITION TO GOD. "I AM A PRAYER" is a true statement for both the religious and the irreligious. Failure to recognize our dependence on God neither neutralizes nor eliminates it. To the heady Church at Corinth, Paul wrote: "And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?"¹

The petition, "Give us this day our daily bread," implies much more than the transfer of a few handfuls of food to our mouths each day. He who said, "It is written, That man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God,"² would certainly not teach that we should confine our askings to our material needs. This petition should remind us that we are on the receiving end in every relation to God. According to Jesus, it covered even the structure of our physical world: "For he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and

on the good, and sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust.”³ Without God’s sun and rain, there could be no vegetation; without vegetation we should have no means of transforming the inorganic matter of the soil into food for our bodies; without a degree of consistency in temperature or in the chemical composition of the air, we should either freeze or roast, or suffocate. Whether we pray or scoff at prayer, we are a prayer by our very nature.

We do not pray to inform God of our needs: “For your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.”⁴ God’s knowledge of and provision for our needs should remove anxiety from our lives: “Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought⁵ for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?”⁶

Jesus did not mean that a man should be as irresponsible as a bird or a lily, for man has a different set of capabilities and needs. The word translated “daily” occurs in the New Testament only here and in the

Lucan form of the same prayer. For a long time its meaning was not clear, but the same word found in a housewife's notebook, buried for centuries in the dry sands of Egypt, referred to the bread for the next day. If that be the meaning in the Lord's Prayer, Jesus did not recommend a hand-to-mouth existence. On the contrary, we should look beyond today. His words about food and clothing were designed to direct the quests of man along the lines of his highest needs: " But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." ⁷ Higher capacities involve higher obligations. A bird may occupy itself with food for the day; a man should not expend his energies in acquiring only this lesser good. He should seek the highest good first, then the lesser good would come in the natural order of events, without the clamor and strife which go with seeking food and clothing primarily.

This fact makes it extremely important that our " askings " should be preceded by the recognition of God's holy and sovereign will, and the family ties binding us to his other children. With these safeguards we are prepared to talk to God about our needs; without them our prayers become selfish. Jesus had a good deal to say about prayers that displayed self and so were

long-winded,⁸ screens for rascality,⁹ or self-congratulatory and therefore an impertinence.¹⁰

Many prayers would freeze on our lips, if we had a remotely adequate idea of God's holiness. There was, for instance, the dear lady who testified, with great manifestation of piety, to the power of prayer in her life. She had prayed for a new fur coat, and at the proper time her heart was warmed and her faith renewed by the possession of a lovely garment, her heart's desire. The point to bear in mind is that, at any time she saw fit to go shopping, she could have bought and paid cash for several fur coats. The Church has suffered much from the silliness of its "friends." It was silly teaching about prayer that made Huckleberry Finn a skeptic when he prayed for some fishing tackle and got everything but the hooks.

There is a good lesson on prayer in a small, back-street shop of a tinsmith in Chicago. A customer had been fascinated by a large pile of pins which he saw always lying on the workbench. Why were they always in a neat pile? One would expect them to get scattered all over the bench and the floor. Curiosity provoked an investigation — then a discovery! A strong magnet under the pile drew every pin to it, and, having become magnetized, each drew the other. Apply this

thought to the two great Commandments: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself."¹¹ This is why all the Law and the Prophets hang on these.¹² In fact the whole spiritual universe hangs together by the principle of a God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son,¹³ and who demands that we love him utterly and our neighbors as ourselves. The central magnet controls the group, so it is necessary to pray, "Thy will be done," before we say, "Give us." This was Jesus' solution for the ills of the world; he offered no other. Paul said that in him "are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."¹⁴ How much longer must we fail in our efforts to live together, before we try his way?

The New Testament lays great stress on the importance of praying in harmony with God's will: "And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."¹⁵ Since the mission of Jesus was one of doing the Father's will, all praying in his name, in harmony with his nature, is effective: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he

will give it you.”¹⁶ Abiding in Jesus and having his word abide in one, so influences that “ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”¹⁷ In the words of Paul, “If any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.”¹⁸ For the transformed man the world is transformed, and his prayers are brought into harmony with Him who transformed him. The Epistle of James gives the clue to the reason for answered prayer: “The inwrought prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”¹⁹ As the Vine pours its vitality into the branches, they feel an impulse to express it in fruit bearing.

Fruit bearing seems to precede and produce, to some extent at least, the conditions necessary to asking in his name.²⁰ When our prayers seem meaningless and empty, does the trouble lie in our lack of fruitage? Prayer brings the soul into vital, disturbing contact with God. The soul is laid bare before him. If we have done very little for him, it is not natural to expect him to do much about our desires, and it is very difficult to know his will.

A shaken faith unfits one to get results: “For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he

shall receive any thing of the Lord." ²¹ Jesus said, "Believe that ye have received, and it shall be unto you." ²² We are to believe that we have the answer at the time of praying, not when God gets around to the matter several months later. If at the beginning we do not have a faith like this, we, at least, can pray, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." ²³ Sometimes we have to pray for enough faith to pray.

Jesus assured us that God knows our needs before we ask him, but we have no assurance in the New Testament that we know our own deeper needs. Paul said, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought," ²⁴ but he offers the remedy: The Spirit "helpeth our infirmities." The Spirit's aid to our infirmities links up with James's inwrought prayer of the righteous man.

It is very important to have our "wits about us" when we pray. Paul found the Church at Corinth tending too much toward the ecstatic, so he warned against prayer that majored in emotionalism and omitted the "understanding," saying: "If I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful. What is it then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will pray with the understanding also: I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the un-

derstanding also." ²⁵ The Church must understand its faith or its energies will be dissipated in the fungi of isms.

The "understanding" should point our prayers at specific objectives. The priests of Baal found it sufficient to cry from morning till noon, "O Baal, hear us." ²⁶ Occasionally one hears Christian prayers in which such a phrase as "O blessed Father" occurs many times in one short prayer. Analysis of the prayer reveals little besides this phrase. Such prayers are generally earnest — the priests of Baal were very much in earnest, exerting themselves greatly and mutilating their bodies — but they do not rise to the level of praying with the understanding.

Jesus seemed always to have something definite to pray about. His prayers were associated with the momentous events of his ministry. After feeding the five thousand and before stilling the storm at sea, "he went up into a mountain apart to pray." ²⁷ Great triumphs are often followed by deep depression, as in the case of Elijah at Mount Carmel and Mount Horeb. ²⁸ Jesus knew no such moods. Did the explanation lie in his praying "apart"?

As his fame increased as a healer of men's ills, "he withdrew himself into the wilderness, and prayed." ²⁹

Otherwise how could he have kept his sanity? Before he called the Twelve, he "continued all night in prayer to God."³⁰ The fact that one of these betrayed him, one denied him, and all disappointed him at times³¹ did not lessen his faith in prayer. He continued to pray for his disciples and others.³² He seems to have redoubled his efforts when he saw a particular danger facing one of them.³³

In his own supreme test he prayed in great agony that the cup might pass from him, but he conditioned its passing on his Father's will.³⁴ The cup did not pass and he drained its dregs, but he kept his head up until he died.³⁵ This was a fitting climax to a ministry begun by prayer and the opening of heaven.³⁶ Those who have followed him in prayer have also been able to keep the chin up.

Not only did Jesus prepare for the great events by prayer, but the routine day's work received similar preparation: "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."³⁷ He taught that other "men ought always to pray, and not to faint."³⁸

The Apostle Paul likewise was both definite and diligent in prayer. To the Philippians he wrote: "And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more

in [full] knowledge and in all judgment [discernment]; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ; being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by [through] Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.”³⁹ He prayed again: “That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled with all the fulness of God.”⁴⁰ Growth in Christian character and insight is the burden of these prayers.

To the Thessalonians he wrote that he was “night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect that which is lacking in your faith.”⁴¹ For the Romans he prayed without ceasing that he might come and impart some spiritual gift, “to the end [that] ye may be established”⁴²; for the Colossians he was “praying always.”⁴³

He felt the need of the prayers of his friends: “That utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my

mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." ⁴⁴ No prayer of Paul's was ever selfish; it always led to some good for others. He who never sought anything for self never knew any want: "For I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and . . . how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." ⁴⁵ Paul sought always to mesh his prayers in with God's will. ⁴⁶

According to Jesus, God is waiting to give to his children: "Make it a habit to ask, and it shall be given you; keep on seeking, and ye shall find; continue knocking, and it shall be opened unto you: for it is an established principle that he who asks receives; and he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks it shall be opened." ⁴⁷ Answered prayer, he implied, is in harmony with the deepest laws of the universe.

Captain Eddie Rickenbacker electrified millions of Americans with his story of the plight, the prayers, and the rescue of himself and his six companions. The sea gull, which alighted on his head within an hour after they prayed, could be referred to as a coinci-

dence — and so could creation. No doubt the sidereal universe and the spiral nebulae millions of light-years beyond the confines of our universe are “coincidences,” but the Christian believes that there is an organizing Mind and sovereign Will behind them.

Why are some prayers not answered? Other men have prayed for rescue and have perished. We must rest our query in the faith that God is holy, loving, and wise. He could provide food for all starving men. If food were our highest need, our faith would be shaken if all men did not receive it when they prayed. Luke touched the core of the problem in these words: “If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? . . . If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?”⁴⁸ God sometimes gives us a better gift than we seek.

James gave us a clue as to why many prayers are not answered: “You ask, and receive not, because you ask evilly, in order that you may spend it on your pleasures.”⁴⁹ The God who so loved that he gave does not encourage his children in self-indulgence by granting their selfish requests. This would be a misdirecting of our moral education. The God of grace would have his

children learn to give of their strength and of their convenience, as well as of their substance, for " it is more blessed to give than to receive." ⁵⁰ There are no blind-alley blessings in God's providences: " Freely ye have received, freely give." ⁵¹ To keep life wholesome, fresh, and joyous every blessing must be regarded as a means of blessing others.

Lord, teach us what to ask and how to use thy blessings.

" And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

MATT. 6:12

CHAPTER V

"Forgive Us"

WHEN WE SAY TO GOD, "GIVE US," WE SHOULD REMEMBER to say also, "*Forgive us*," for we have misused many of the gifts and opportunities which he has bestowed. God has made an investment in each human being, and from each he asks for a corresponding return. This investment consists primarily of life itself. The mere fact of living places inescapable responsibilities on each individual. Along with life, God has given us certain capacities and opened many doors. The doors we have ignored and the capacities we have allowed to wither.

An investment involves an obligation; an unpaid obligation becomes a debt. To the extent that we have not yielded a return for God's outlay on us, we are in debt to him. A sin is not always an evil act; it may be a failure to act. The primary meaning of "sin" is "to miss the mark," to miss the goal of life. If we have

failed, in any respect, to arrive at the goal God set for us, we must say, "Forgive us."

According to Jesus, forgiveness is in proportion to and contingent upon our forgiveness of those who have wronged us: "Forgive us our debts, *as* we forgive our debtors." Some interpreters translate: "Forgive us our debts, *because* we forgive our debtors." This interpretation is utterly out of harmony with New Testament ideas, for it would make man's merit the ground for forgiveness. The New Testament never so conceives it: God's forgiveness is uniformly an act of pure grace.

"As we forgive" should remind us that it is not possible to receive forgiveness until we have granted it: "If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."¹ This is not because God is vengeful and arbitrary; our own nature makes it necessary to forgive before we can receive the benefits of forgiveness.

The parable of the Unmerciful Servant² sets forth a God who readily forgives an unpayable debt because a man cries for mercy. The servant, however, was disqualified for receiving forgiveness because of his treatment of his fellow servant. Jesus by a few bold strokes drew an unforgettable picture contrasting the "king"

and the "servant." The debt to the king was a staggering sum; that due the servant was a mere pittance by comparison. The king out of a great compassion forgave his servant, but the servant took his fellow servant by the throat (the Greek says, "Choked him") and demanded, "Pay me that thou owest." When his victim cried for mercy, he turned a deaf ear. What a contrast between God's magnanimity and man's brutality! This parable teaches that we disqualify ourselves to receive forgiveness. It is idle to pray, "Forgive us," if we do not forgive. God, like the father of the Prodigal, is waiting to forgive, but he does not bestow forgiveness until we say, "I have sinned," and are ready to forgive those who ask our pardon for injuries to us.

Our refusal to forgive forms a dam in our own souls, shutting off God's grace. The problem arises as to what to do in the case of the person who wrongs us and will not admit it. There is the case of two brothers: One was offensively aggressive and tyrannical; the other, a very godly, but retiring, man. When the domineering one did his brother an injustice, he would tauntingly say, "You ought to forgive me; you are a Christian." Jesus said that this type of man should become to us "as an heathen man and a publican."³

Paul said, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." ⁴ Neither he nor his Saviour was able to live at peace with some men. But what should the Christian do in such cases? Jesus said, "Pray for them which despitefully use you." ⁵ God does not forgive the impenitent, and he does not ask us to do so; but God does entreat such men: "Be ye reconciled to God," ⁶ and he expects us to intercede for them. This will break down the dam in our souls, and will in many cases break the hard will of the impenitent.

If forgiveness were merely a legalistic act of taking our sins off God's books, God might forgive us arbitrarily, but forgiveness is a vital experience of the inner man. Something immense happens within us. The whole of life is shaken, and it rearranges itself on new lines.

An unforgiving spirit is like the festering focus of infection. Matters grow worse and worse until the poison is let out. This requires surgery which cuts deep. The inmost soul must be opened up in confession to God and forgiveness to man before healing can come. Our very nature demands this.

A large part of the Church, both Protestant and Catholic, has thought of forgiveness as merely escape from the *penalty* of sin. Our dictionaries have fallen

in line by defining forgiveness as "release from punishment or the obligation to make amends." This is a correct definition so far as popular usage goes, but it represents a sub-Christian view. It stops at the wrong point. Forgiveness also removes the sense of guilt: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." ⁷ Forgiveness brings cleansing with it: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." ⁸ Forgiveness brings a new surge of life into the soul, ⁹ and is often associated with healing. ¹⁰ Letting out the pus of grudge-holding always brings healing to the soul.

Refusal to forgive not only closes up the infection within which is poisoning the entire being, but Paul associated it also with grieving the Holy Spirit: "And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye were sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." ¹¹ The grief of God over unforgiving self-righteousness appears in the parable of the Prodigal Son. The father's entreaty to the elder son fell on deaf ears. ¹² The elder

brother was the joy-killer of the day: He killed his father's, his brother's, the household's, and his own joy by refusing to be glad that a brother had recovered his manhood.

The Bible sometimes speaks in terms of God's unreadiness to forgive: "And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert [turn about], and be healed."¹³ This is profound irony. Isaiah had been sent to win his people from their evil ways that they might be forgiven: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."¹⁴ That Isaiah understood the irony to look toward the opportunity for mercy is clear from his question, "Lord, how long?" The reply indicates that the people are not ready for forgiveness: They must be disciplined, yea, even desolated, before they are ready to receive forgiveness.¹⁵

Jesus found Isaiah's words appropriate as a judgment upon and a warning to his own generation.¹⁶ His heart message was expressed in the great invita-

tion: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."¹⁷ Nothing gives rest to the soul like a sense of forgiveness.

This brings us to the popular phrase, "The unpardonable sin." Like much popular "theology," many lurid ideas have been associated with it, and some lurid sermons have been preached under this title. While the New Testament does not use the phrase, it does teach that there is sin which cannot be forgiven: "Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost."¹⁸ But what is blasphemy against the Holy Ghost? Jesus' beneficent work of healing the demonized had been attributed to the power of Beelzebul, the prince of demons, not to the Spirit of God. The blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, then, is that moral perversity which attributes a good work to an evil source. This is contrary to the moral structure of the universe: "A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."¹⁹ The same fountain does not send forth sweet water and bitter.²⁰ The Devil does not spend his time helping men to be whole and to be sane. To confuse good and evil disqualifies one to be forgiven, for moral perversity and release from a sense of guilt cannot go together.

God's willingness to forgive is infinite, and so should

ours be. The rabbinical standard had been to forgive three times; Peter suggested raising the Christian standard to seven; Jesus raised it to seventy times seven.²¹ He did not mean that we should keep a record and "crack down" on our brother when he sinned the four hundred and ninety-first time. Seven, to the Hebrews the complete number, referred to full readiness to forgive a penitent wrongdoer.

Luke reported Jesus as saying that if our brother sinned against us seven times a day and seven times a day sought pardon, we should forgive him. This was not easy to accept, so the apostles said, "Lord, Increase our faith."²² He was not offering the limits within which one could sin with impunity, but rather the standard by which the offended should gauge his willingness to forgive. There is, of course, something wrong with a man's repentance if he sins against his brother seven times a day.

As we have said, the Christian must remember that thoughts which never issue into words or deeds may be sins. Evil desires may fester in the mind, doing terrible injury to our characters. Murder and adultery may never get beyond the thought stage, but they make us guilty.²³ When Simon Magus sought to buy the power to bestow the Holy Spirit, Peter said: "Pray

God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart might be forgiven thee. For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity."²⁴ Evil thoughts put Simon in a position to sin. Being a magician, he subconsciously read into Christianity his own trade: The gift of the Holy Spirit was simply another trick. We too bring our own predilections into Christianity and make of it something strange, even at times monstrous. For our perversions of Christianity, O God, forgive us!

As Christian thought dwelt on the meaning of forgiveness, new depths appeared. In the Old Testament there were three Hebrew words translated forgive: God covered sin, i.e., put it out of sight; he lifted it up or away; he sent it away. In the New Testament, the usual Greek word means remove, send away, let off.²⁵ It is especially common in the Synoptic Gospels, but Paul used it only once and then in a quotation.²⁶ His favorite word²⁷ for this idea stressed not so much the action of removing the sin, as the grace involved in its removal. Luke, profoundly influenced by Paul, is the only other New Testament writer to use this word.²⁸ It carries the idea of gratuitous favor. This represents a distinct growth in the appreciation of the graciousness of forgiveness.

Paul supplied a fine example of being gracious in proportion as God had been gracious to him. It was in the matter of the "great offender" at Corinth. Someone, whom Paul refrained from naming, had led a vicious, nasty fight against Paul, accusing him of insincerity,²⁹ of fickleness,³⁰ of talking too much of himself,³¹ of being very obscure in his preaching,³² of being crazy,³³ of being tyrannical,³⁴ of filching from the collections that he had taken up for the poor saints at Jerusalem,³⁵ of being quite "lowly" (afraid to speak his own mind) when in their midst, but very courageous when at a safe distance,³⁶ of glorying in his apostolic authority,³⁷ of being weak in his bodily presence but a strong letter writer,³⁸ of being rude in speech,³⁹ of preaching the Gospel for no pay (!) thereby confessing that he was an impostor,⁴⁰ and of making a fool of himself in general.⁴¹ One marvels at the fertility of the minds of people who could think of so many ugly things to say about their "preacher." They seem to hold the all-time record in spite of some very stiff competition since. But the sentiment changed in Corinth and Paul's friends were heard; the great offender was censured by the Church, and he acknowledged his guilt. Paul then wrote the Church to "be gracious" to him lest he be "swallowed up with overmuch sor-

row." He went on to say that whatever they forgave in this man he had already forgiven for their sakes in the presence of Christ, "lest Satan should get an advantage of [overreach] us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." ⁴² Paul knew what had happened in his own soul when God was gracious to him, who had been "a blasphemer and a persecutor, and injurious." ⁴³ He wanted the man who had injured him to be transformed in a similar way.

Paul established the principle that Christians should be gracious to one another, "forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." ⁴⁴ How often Satan has overreached the Church and the individual since then, because of an unforgiving spirit! "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." ⁴⁵

O God, forgive us for our failures, especially for failing to be gracious to others, as thou hast been gracious to us.

MATT. 6:13A

*“And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.”*

CHAPTER VI

"Lead Us"

THIS PETITION IS PUT IN TWO FORMS, POSITIVE AND negative: "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." It recognizes our need for a guide. The journey of life lies over a new road for everyone and since our vision is both myopic and astigmatic, we all have missed the way and therefore come short of the glory of God.¹ "If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch,"² but the sons of God are all led by the Spirit of God.³

Why should God "tempt" mankind? James says that he does not: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of [by] his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth [gives birth to] sin: and sin, when it is finished [grown up], bringeth forth death."⁴ Here we have the genealogy of sin traced through the maternal

line, grandmother, mother, daughter: lust, sin, death. There are only three generations, for the line runs out in death. Then, phoenixlike, a new start is made elsewhere.

Do James and Jesus disagree on the matter of temptation? If so, it is the only point on which they do, for the epistle has in it many echoes of the Sermon on the Mount. The petition, "Lead us not into temptation," harmonizes with Jesus' own experience, for he was led by the Spirit into a desert place to be tempted.⁵ James and Jesus were using the word "tempt" in different senses. Originally it meant "to attempt," "to try," then "to test." Since man often failed when tested, the word came to mean "to entice to do evil." It is in this latter sense that James said that God does not tempt man.

All these uses occur in the Greek New Testament, and they are translated in various ways in the A. V. After his conversion, Paul attempted to, "assayed to," join the disciples in Jerusalem, but they were afraid of him.⁶ He attempted to, "assayed to," go into Bithynia, but was turned toward Macedonia.⁷ His enemies said that he had attempted to, "gone about to," defile the Temple,⁸ and later they attempted to, "went about to," kill him.⁹

The meaning "to test" is the common one in the New Testament. Abraham "was tried," tested, in the offering of Isaac;¹⁰ the Old Testament saints were "tempted," tested, by their persecutions;¹¹ the Christians at Ephesus "tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and . . . found them liars."¹² Jesus "proved" Philip, tested his faith, when he said, "Whence shall we buy bread, that these may eat?"¹³ Paul urged the turbulent Corinthians to "examine," test by their conduct, themselves to see if they really were "in the faith."¹⁴

In the sense of "entice to do evil" this word is practically limited, in the New Testament, to James 1:13, 14. The apostle stoutly denied that God leads man into evil. On the contrary, every good gift comes from him; he is more consistent than even the sun or the moon. They cast shadows by their turning; he never varies his beneficent ways.¹⁵ He "maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."¹⁶

James was correcting a false interpretation of "lead us not into temptation." The Church had fallen into some serious sins. Christians were rationalizing away their moral responsibility by saying: "I am tempted of God. Who can withstand God?" It sounded very

pious, but was highly immoral, a slander upon the character of God. This passage gives a good hint as to the manner in which the word "tempt" changed in meaning from "attempt" to "entice to do wrong": Men read their own moral failures into God's dealing with them.

Jesus used the words "tempt" and "temptation" in the sense of "to test" and "testing." We are taught to pray that we may avoid being tested. This is not "escapism," but common sense. It is presumption to seek to be tested, expecting God to get us out of trouble. This is what the Tempter sought when he said to Jesus: "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone."¹⁷ Jesus replied, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt [test] the Lord thy God."¹⁸ To seek to be tested is really a test of God's willingness or ability to rescue one. It is not a mark of faith, but lack of faith.

The Tempter took the truth of God's providence out of its setting and offered it as a provocation to sin. The A. V. translation, "If thou be the Son of God," misses the fine point of the Tempter's approach. He raised no doubt about the Sonship of Jesus. In fact, he

assumed that as a ground of the test of Jesus' faith. He said in reality, " If you are the Son of God, as you are, cast yourself down "; i.e., since you are the Son of God, demonstrate it by a magnificent display of daring faith. Jesus took this distorted truth and put it in its proper setting. The character of God is the ground of our faith. To test him indicates our suspicion either of his willingness or of his ability to save; therefore it is sinful. When Jesus' hour was come, he went to Calvary because it was the Father's will, a greater leap of faith than jumping from the pinnacle of the Temple.

In the crisis of Gethsemane, Jesus said to his disciples, " Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation [testing]: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ¹⁹ Our weakness, instability, makes it wise for us to pray, " Lead us not into temptation." There is always the danger of failure. Those who realize the danger are much less likely to fail than are the overconfident.

Jesus, however, realized the necessity of testing, and promised his disciples that they should be compensated for their trials: " Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that

ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.”²⁰

Men, like machines, must be tested before their merits are known. The great ships of the air are thoroughly tested before being put into service. So much depends upon the way they behave under trial that a single detail must not be neglected. Every flaw is remedied as completely as possible. So, although the Christian rightly prays, “Lead us not into temptation,” there is much to be gained by being tested: “My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, lacking in nothing.”²¹ Peter spoke of the “proved residue” of faith which is much more precious than gold.²² By this he meant that what is left, after faith has been through the crucible, is infinitely precious. Testing produces character.

Paul added a similar testimony: “And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad [poured out] in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”²³ We become seasoned veterans under trial, and

we wear the insignia of our victory in our bearing and poise. Therefore "we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose."²⁴

The temptations that bring joy are not those that we seek or those that we blunder into, but those that come to us in line of duty. James said that they fall around us. He also recognized that we shall not always know what to do about them: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him."²⁵

In the Synoptic Gospels, it is always Jesus who is tempted. At the beginning of his ministry,²⁶ he was tested along the lines of the use of his power — would he use it for self or for others? He refused to turn stones to bread for his own convenience; he followed the way of self-denial to the end. Secondly, would he do stunts to win a following? He won on the issue of right and wrong; suffering and dying to do so. Thirdly, would he take the short cut of compromise? Again, the answer was, "No." Jesus was always tested by those hostile to him, so the test was intended as a temptation.²⁷

From God's standpoint, Jesus' testing was designed

to fit him for his work as the Saviour of men: "For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain [pioneer] of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one." ²⁸ Since his work was to redeem men, not angels, he took our nature and was tempted in all points like as we are that he might be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities." ²⁹ The Pioneer of faith was perfected through trial, and he says, "Follow thou me."

A great athlete must train rigorously for many years to develop the heart, the lungs, the muscles, and the co-ordination which enable him to become a champion. The discipline required to develop a godly character is even longer and more exacting; therefore testing is both necessary and constructive. So the Christian is not to consider the "fiery trial" which overtakes him as something strange. ³⁰ It has a beneficent purpose. Furthermore Jesus went through all kinds of testing in order to help us through: "For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." ³¹

We are assured that "the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations." ³² There seems to

be no way to deliver the ungodly; his perverted desires take him back to his old sin. This truth was embodied in the proverb, "The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire."³³ A change of nature is the primary need.

The way of deliverance was suggested by Paul: "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer [permit] you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation make a way to escape,³⁴ that ye may be able to bear it."³⁵ As architects design theaters with exits, for use in case of fire, so God makes an exit for each difficult situation in life. No Christian need be defeated by the circumstances of life. This is not a promise that the Christian will not suffer, but that he need never lose his honor or integrity. Jesus never promised smooth sailing for his followers, but he did control the storms.

The exit from some situations may involve loss of property, of reputation for a time, or even of life itself, but never of character. The exit from Gethsemane was Calvary, with its ignominy and agony, but Jesus did not lose his poise, his assurance, his character. The men who crucified him would have passed into oblivion within a generation or two except for the

dubious fame acquired by their part in his death. He becomes more widely known and loved with each century. One day every knee will bow and every tongue confess his Lordship.³⁶

The way of escape, the exit, suggests the other side of the petition: "Deliver us from evil." The Greek says, "From the evil." Scholars are divided as to whether the reference is to the evil one, the Devil, or to the evil thing. There is little need to raise this question and less to answer it. It is true that "the evil" can be either masculine or neuter, referring either to a person or to a thing, but it can also refer to evil in any form, personal or otherwise. Why pray for deliverance from only a part of our difficulty?

The New Testament speaks of many forms of deliverance: deliverance "from the hand of enemies";³⁷ from "the power of darkness";³⁸ from a body under the dominion of sin;³⁹ from "the wrath to come";⁴⁰ from "unruly and evil men."⁴¹

Paul asked the Roman Christians to unite with him in prayer that he might "be delivered from them that do not believe."⁴² He had learned at Lystra what the wrath of such men could mean. Martyrdom was no fun to Paul. Unlike Ignatius, he did not yearn to hear the "crunching" of his own bones.

The unbelieving in Judea did set upon Paul in all

their fury, and would have torn him limb from limb, had he not been rescued by the Roman army.⁴³ Did he feel that his own prayers and the intercessions of the Roman Christians had gone unanswered? At the end of life he wrote that the Lord had delivered him out of all the persecutions and afflictions that had come to him in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra,⁴⁴ that he had delivered him from "the mouth of the lion" and that he would yet deliver him.⁴⁵ A man who felt that God had failed him in Jerusalem could not have written so confidently.

For Paul deliverance did not mean escape from suffering, but freedom to carry out his commission. Hardship cast him back on God, his real source of strength: "For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."⁴⁶ Not even death itself could prevent Paul's carrying out his commission, for God could raise him up and start him on his way again. God had said to him, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness,"

so Paul said, "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." ⁴⁷

The mob in Jerusalem did not prevent Paul from visiting Rome, a long-deferred hope; ⁴⁸ actually it was instrumental in his going — not, of course, in the way he had planned. Yet, from Paul's viewpoint, all things did work together for good.

In speaking of deliverance, we must not think negatively. We are delivered *for* something, not merely *from* something. We are delivered "from the power of darkness" and *transferred* into the Kingdom of the Son of his love. ⁴⁹ God does not leave us in a no man's land between darkness and light; when we leave the darkness behind, we become "partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." ⁵⁰ It is God who leads us from one realm to the other.

O God, lead us as thou seest fit, but lead us to thyself.

" And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth."

LUKE 11:5-8

CHAPTER VII

"A Friend in Need"

IN THE MODEL PRAYER, JESUS DOES NOT MENTION intercession. It may be implied in such expressions as "our Father," "give us," "forgive us," and "lead us." These certainly suggest that as we pray for ourselves, we should include other members of the family. Intercessory prayer forgets self in the need of another. In Luke, the model for our praying is followed immediately by an excellent example of intercessory prayer in the form of a parable: A friend speaks to a Friend for a friend.

We have a proverb, "A friend in need is a friend indeed." In this proverb friendship is expressed in the aid one receives in time of need; in the parable it lies in the aid one can give in such times. The world thinks primarily of benefits moving inward for self; Jesus thought of them going outward to others. This is an essential difference between Christianity and paganism.

Intercessory prayer expresses our concern for the welfare of others. We speak to our Friend about their needs, because we cannot supply their lack from our own resources: "A friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him." The Christian knows a Friend who can and wants to help his friends; therefore he knows that his own inability does not remove his responsibility. The host in the parable does not shirk the obligation of friendship by saying to the hungry traveler: "There is no food in the house. We must wait until morning." He goes at midnight, a most inconvenient hour, and asks for help.

When we are able to meet the needs of our friends from our own resources, we should not take their case to God. It would have been a most inconsiderate man who waked his neighbor to borrow bread when he had bread enough at home. But there are many needs beyond our capacity to satisfy, hungers of the heart and the spirit. These should be the special burden of intercessory prayer.

We live in a world that hungers and thirsts. Millions are undernourished in body. Millions well-fed in body long for something they cannot define and do not understand. Still others hunger and thirst after righteousness.

All these needs are urgent. Did you ever go to bed at midnight hungry and try to sleep? The host in the parable felt the urgency of the situation, for when his Friend answered, "Trouble me not," he continued to ask. Jesus said that he got his answer, not on the basis of friendship, but because of his importunity. The Greek word means "shamelessness" or "barefacedness." This is not to teach the reluctance of God to answer such prayers, but the earnestness with which we should press them.

The New Testament nowhere suggests the unwillingness of God to answer sincere prayers. Not only is he willing but infinitely able: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."¹ The parable suggests that he does not limit himself to our askings. The host asked for three loaves; his Friend gave him as many as he needed. A house with no bread at midnight may not have had much at supper. The host and his family may have been hungry too. This is always true of those who pray for the spiritual needs of others.

The apparent unwillingness to arise at midnight is a test of our earnestness. Does our prayer represent a profound soul yearning, or is it merely a passing notion? We cannot expect God to take our prayers seriously unless we do. He expects us to be earnest enough

not only to do all we can about the needs of men before we come to him, but to do all we can after we have talked to him. This brings a double benefit, one to the friend in need and another to the friend in deed.

According to Jesus, a friend in need is our peculiar responsibility — his need, not ours. A little revolutionary? Yes, semirevolutionary, to say the least. It turns things bottom side up. The world has developed an every-man-for-himself-and-the-Devil-take-the-hindmost philosophy; Jesus taught that we should be as much concerned for our neighbor as for ourselves. Intercessory prayer is the highest form of expressing our concern for our friends.

Jesus talked much about friends. He called his disciples his friends: "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do."² When a man recovers himself from the philosophy of the world and discovers for himself the mind of Christ,³ it produces great joy in heaven. It is like a shepherd who has found a lost sheep, or a woman who has recovered a lost coin, who calls together friends and neighbors for a jubilation.⁴ Possibly this is a poor illustration for our age, for we are too busy to take more than passing note when good fortune comes to our neighbor.

Friendship calls for sacrifice, and is a measure of one's capacity to love. Jesus suggested that the ultimate in love is expressed in friendship: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." ⁵

Friendship excludes some things. The ways of God and the ways of the world are radically different: "Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." ⁶ This is the God who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem it. Redemption produces transformation. When we love the world, we conform to its ways, becoming God's enemies. Jesus taught that there can be no neutrality where right and wrong are involved: "He that is not with me is against me." ⁷ Jesus' work had been under attack and his character had been besmirched. In such a case there can be no neutrals.

Being a friend of Jesus is different from being a friend of anyone else. In human friendships there is an element of compromise. Each party must give in at certain points, but Jesus claims absolute authority to regulate the terms of friendship with him: "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." ⁸ The pin does not draw the magnet, but the magnet the pin; it is Christ who draws all men, therefore they are

under his authority, the authority of One who laid down his life for them.

When we speak to our Friend about a friend, we should be specific: "Friend, lend me three loaves." The host presented the case of a hungry man, tired and worn. He had estimated what would be required to satisfy his needs.⁹ There is, as we have said, a hint in the parable that God may give more than we ask: "He will rise and give him as many as he needeth." Paul has reminded us that he is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think."

The New Testament examples of intercession give a clue as to what we should ask for others. Jesus said, "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever."¹⁰ While we cannot pray for the giving of the Holy Spirit in the sense that Jesus did, we can and should pray that God will bestow the Spirit upon individual men and women.

Paul prayed that God would give his readers the capacity to understand the reach and depth of the love of God,¹¹ a love which transcends our understanding unaided by the Spirit. That should be our prayer for the whole Church today. The Christian doctrine of love, as we have said, has never been understood by

the Church in its profundity.¹² Some have called sentimentality love and others have confused love with lust. The Christian idea of love as the giving of oneself for the good of another has hardly dawned on the Church. There has been a "famine of love" and now we have war, pestilence, and famine.

For the Colossians, Paul prayed, "That ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding; that ye might walk worthy of the Lord."¹³ One cannot live worthily as a member of God's family until one knows the will of the Head of the family. Spiritual insight is absolutely necessary if we are to be worthy representatives of our Saviour. Without it we constantly misrepresent him. No prayer today could be more appropriate than that the individual Christian might have spiritual understanding. The Kingdom will never come without it.

For the Thessalonians, Paul prayed, "That our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."¹⁴ What a prayer! There are three great ideas here: that God would reckon these Christians worthy of their high calling as Christians; that he would express through them completely his own goodness; and that he would bring to fruition in a

mighty way the product of their faith. This was in order "that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in [among] you, and ye in him."¹⁵ We Christians are not so sensitive as we should be about the manner in which our conduct reflects upon our Saviour. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven" is a primary obligation of every member of God's family.

In the New Testament, prayer for others moves on a high plane. It deals with the spiritual welfare and insight and with the fruits of life, as well as with the everyday needs. It is time for the Church to pray for understanding of God's will.

When Paul asked for the prayers of his friends, he was concerned with the progress of the Kingdom and the growth in Christian character of his people: "Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may have free course, and be glorified."¹⁶ Again he wrote, "Withal praying also for us, that God would open unto us a door of utterance, to speak the mystery."¹⁷ He knew what it meant to be hungry and cold,¹⁸ but he never asked for creature comforts for himself. As we have noted, he never pleaded the cause of his own wants: "For I have learned, in whatsoever

state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." ¹⁹ Paul claimed the right to support while he preached the Gospel, ²⁰ but he would not allow his needs to take precedence over the interests of the Kingdom.

The only example in the New Testament of a selfish request for prayer is that of Simon Magus, who said to Peter, "Pray ye to the Lord for me, that none of these things which ye have spoken come upon me." ²¹ This is the request of a man who is frightened and under a sense of guilt. It reveals the difference in Simon and the man who is made new in Christ Jesus.

Probably in no way is our character more decisively revealed than in our prayers. A man who had lived selfishly and softly, but had hardened his heart against the needs of others, cried, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." ²² There is neither confession of sin, nor penitence. Death does not change a man's character. In life he had had no time for Lazarus' needs; he can still think of Lazarus only as ministering to himself.

The question arises, Is there ever a time when we should not intercede for another? John spoke of a "sin unto death," and added, "I do not say that he shall pray for it."²³ Note that he did not forbid praying for such a person; he merely did not require it. This was a case somewhat like the unforgivable sin mentioned earlier. There is little hope for moral perversity, but it is a very heavy responsibility to assume that any man is a hopeless case. The Church at Jerusalem considered Paul such, even after his conversion, neither trusting nor accepting him until Barnabas stood surety for him.²⁴ We often underestimate the power and willingness of God to transform men. We have no evidence that the Church in Jerusalem ever prayed that Paul might see the light.

One may intercede against one, as well as for one. The former is dangerous. On one occasion, Elijah interceded with God against Israel, saying, "Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life."²⁵ In the main, Elijah's charge was true, but he overlooked a host of loyal folk who lacked the courage to assert themselves. There are hosts today who need rallying to Christ. They must be taught, that they may understand and be willing to sacrifice. This is our challenge.

God could answer these deepest needs directly, but for our own good he lays that responsibility on us. This is our privilege.

But Deity does not leave all intercession to weak, forgetful man. We have seen that the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with unspeakable groaning.²⁶ The Son also intercedes for us; ²⁷ in fact, " he ever liveth to make intercession " for us.²⁸ The primary work of the risen Saviour is intercession for the redemption of man. The most nearly divine function of man is intercession for one's fellows.

O God, teach us how to pray for others.

*"I thank thee, O Father, Lord of
heaven and earth, because thou hast
bid these things from the wise and
prudent, and hast revealed them unto
babes. Even so, Father: for so it
seemed good in thy sight."*

MATT. 11:25B, 26

CHAPTER VIII

"I Thank Thee, Father"

THANKSGIVING, LIKE INTERCESSION, IS NOT MENTIONED in the model prayer. It is, however, deeply imbedded in Jesus' own practice. He habitually thanked God for food,¹ as did Paul,² following the custom of Israel. When we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," we should thank God for the food he has given us. We tend to say, "Give me," and to forget to say, "I thank thee."

The most impressive example of Jesus' thanksgiving is that for the principles governing God's self-revelation: to the "wise and prudent," those who "know all the answers," he does not speak. The "babes," those whose minds are eagerly receptive, are the recipients of his revelation. Self-sufficiency, whether it be in the realm of character or of knowledge, closes the door between man and God: "I came not to call the [self-] righteous";³ "thou hast hidden these things from the wise."⁴ There is biting sarcasm in the words "right-

eous" and "wise." Jesus was taking these men at their own self-appraisal. In effect he said, "God will have none of you." God selects those who, realizing their need, are willing to learn and makes himself known to them. For this Jesus gave thanks: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." ⁵

The mind that is crystallized along the lines of its prejudices and past experiences cannot face the light of new truth. Although God may speak in its presence, he does not speak to it. It hears, but does not understand. The man who boasts of his wisdom is left to his folly: "Where is the wise man? Where is the learned man? Where is the controversialist of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since the world by its wisdom about God did not come to know God, it pleased God through the foolishness of the thing preached [a crucified Saviour] to save those who believe." ⁶ In these words, Paul spoke out of his own experience, when through his wisdom he knew not God and so persecuted the followers of Christ. From this experience Paul learned that one might "have a zeal for God, but not according to [true] knowledge." ⁷

Jesus also thanked God as he stood by the tomb of Lazarus, not so much because Lazarus would be raised

to life, as that the people would hear and believe that the Father had sent him.⁸ Although Jesus was fond of Lazarus, personal friendship did not eclipse the larger aspects of his mission. Vindication of his claims that men might see and believe was supremely important to Jesus, and so he made it also a ground of thanksgiving.

The disciples of Jesus kept their perspective in thanksgiving, never allowing it to degenerate to the trivial. It is well to remember that thanksgiving may be an affront to God. When the Pharisee " stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are," he offended against good taste, and sinned against God. The fundamental sin of all sins is the refusal to look honestly at one's own sins. The psalmist said, " O give thanks unto the Lord for he is good "; the Pharisee said, in effect, " God, I thank thee that I am good."

This unworthy popular conception of goodness throws some light on Jesus' rebuke of the man who addressed him as " Good Master." " And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God." ⁹ Jesus was not confessing his own sinfulness, as some have maintained; he was rather reminding a certain ruler that he was using the term " good " too lightly.

Peter and John, after being beaten for preaching this Christ, "departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."¹⁰ Although the word "thank" is not used in this account, the spirit of thanksgiving is manifest.

The words, "thank," "thanks," "thanksgiving," and "thankful," are used by Paul or about Paul more than twice as frequently as in all of the rest of the New Testament. Probably no other man, unless it were John, has so profoundly understood the Christian faith. A study of his practice should give us a clear light for our own expression of thanksgiving.

Not only does Paul habitually thank God for food; we find him thanking him for friendship: "And from thence [Rome], when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as the Appii forum, and The three taverns: whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage."¹¹ There was particular significance in this thanksgiving. We have already noted that he had asked the Roman Christians to pray that he might "be delivered from them that do not believe in Judæa,"¹² but had suffered mob violence there.¹³ Would the Romans regard this as a repudiation of Paul or as a case of unanswered prayer? After two long years of im-

prisonment and a stormy voyage, ending in shipwreck, he now approached Rome. There were, no doubt, many questions in his mind as to how he and his Gospel would be received. His near martyrdom could, in the light of popular ideas, be taken as a judgment of God. The principle of the cross, the vicarious suffering of the innocent, had not entered the thinking of many men. Misfortune was regarded as a judgment of the gods. An example of this is seen in the reactions of the crowd when the viper fastened its fangs in Paul's hand.¹⁴ Paul's chief concern was not personal vindication, but the reception of his Gospel in Rome.¹⁵ So this group of friendly Christians cheered him greatly.

It is right for us to thank God for friends. Nothing so cheers us in time of sorrow or discouragement as the sympathy of true friends, except the presence of the Friend supreme. The ultimate meaning of thanksgiving for friends, however, lies in the basis of the friendship. There are "friends" who merely help us to fritter away our time; there are friends who suffer with us in time of trial; there are friends who are bound to us by a common devotion to a great cause. The fitness of thanksgiving for friends is measured by the nobility of the friendship.

The most frequent ground of thanksgiving in the

Pauline Epistles is for the Christian character of his readers. How often do we thank God for some noble Christian whose influence pervades an entire community? Do we not more frequently hunt for flaws and comfort our consciences by dwelling upon them?

Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians, who received the Gospel as the Word of God, not as the word of men, and that that Word had worked in them effectually,¹⁶ expressing itself in a working faith, a toiling love, and a perseverance which grew out of their "hope in our Lord Jesus Christ."¹⁷ The faith of this Church grew exceedingly, their love to each other abounded, and they stood up under persecution and tribulation. For these things Paul thanked God always "without ceasing."¹⁸

For the trouble-making Corinthians, he thanked God always "for the grace of God which was given you by Jesus Christ; that in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge."¹⁹ One has the inescapable feeling that there is a note of irony here, for later²⁰ Paul reminded them that knowledge puffs one up, but love builds up. The difference is that between the inflated ego of the religious exhibitionist and the solid character of a genuine Christian. The Church at Corinth was undoubtedly addicted to exhibitionism,²¹ but rather pov-

erty-stricken in Christian love.²² For us, however, good came out of this evil, for this deficiency in Corinthian Christianity evoked the " Hymn of Love " in I Cor., ch. 13. How much poorer the Church universal would have been if Paul had not left us this treasure!

Paul and " all the churches of the Gentiles " gave thanks to Priscilla and Aquila for their self-forgetting spirit in risking their lives to save his,²³ thus enabling him to continue his service, in his appointed field, the Gentile world. Although Paul addressed his thanks to Priscilla and Aquila, he no doubt thanked God for such friends.

For the Philippians' co-operative partnership in spreading the Gospel, he thanked God in his " every prayer." ²⁴ To the Colossians, he wrote of his thanksgiving for the fruit borne by the Gospel throughout the world, as it was also bearing fruit among them.²⁵ For the Ephesians' " faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints," he ceased not to give thanks.²⁶ For the character of Philemon and for his love and faith toward " the Lord Jesus, and toward all the saints," Paul thanked God, " making mention of thee always in my prayers." ²⁷

There are times when it is fitting to give God thanks for what he has done for us as individuals. Paul, in agony of soul, cried, " O wretched man that I am!

who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"²⁸ When the sense of release came, he cried, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord."²⁹ The significance of the cry of relief lies in the fact that this release is available for all men who believe in Christ Jesus. Note that Paul does not say *my* Lord, but *our* Lord.

There is one example of thanksgiving in the New Testament that might by some be interpreted as having a selfish tinge: "I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name."³⁰ The point of the thanksgiving is, not that Paul himself was involved, but that his work might suffer. Some of his admirers at Corinth were trying to make him the leader of a faction. Had he baptized widely, these people might be posed as his disciples, creating further confusion and misunderstanding in an already muddled situation. Paul thanked God that he had escaped this mistake.

Thanksgiving was definitely a habit with the first-generation Christians. Such expressions as: "I cease not to give thanks for you"; "I thank my God upon every remembrance of you"; "We give thanks to God always for you all"; "In everything give thanks"; "Continue in prayer and watch in the same with thanksgiving," give the tone of their lives.

Would modern Christianity be more vital if it were more thankful? Is there any ground for argument on this score? Thanksgiving is a necessary outlet for the human spirit. We are inevitably on the receiving end in our dealings with God. The only return we can make is in thanksgiving and service, which is itself a form of thanksgiving. Flow in one direction with no outlet makes a stoppage inevitable. If it is to be wholesome, there must be circulation in our spiritual life, or gangrene of the soul sets in. Religion without thanksgiving becomes dour and formidable. Nothing opens up the channels of our spiritual life like saying, "I thank thee, O Father."

"The great failure" of the Gentiles was rooted in their failure to give thanks to God. Since they did not glorify him as God, they felt no urge to give thanks, and so they "became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools."³¹ Viciousness, treachery, and folly became characteristic of the world that ceased to thank God.³²

The Old Testament saints spontaneously gave thanks to God. For them thanksgiving and praise were so closely intertwined that the same Hebrew word³³ covered both ideas. In The Book of Psalms praise and

thanks are constantly intermingled: "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever." ³⁴ Our familiar expression "halleluiah" is in Hebrew a sentence: "Praise ye the Lord." It recurs again and again in the psalms. Religion to be joyous must be thankful, full of thanks.

The psalmist yearned to see other men praise God: "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" ³⁵ When you feel "grouchy" and "sour," try praying with the psalmist, "Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness." Prayer becomes formal and boring when self-centered, vital and exhilarating when thankful.

In the New Testament, the Magnificat of Mary ³⁶ is one of the most beautiful of all expressions of praise and gratitude. It is fitting that such a woman should have been chosen to be the mother of our Lord.

We have infinitely more for which to be thankful than we realize. There is a great truth in the words of the old hymn:

"Count your many blessings, name them one
by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord hath
done." ³⁷

To repeat, the fruits of thanksgiving are radiant faith and joyful service. Paul was pre-eminently a man of thanksgiving. This spirit came to his aid when, as an old man, broken by his labors, he was cast into prison. He wrote: " Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again. Keep on rejoicing." ³⁸ This is the man, who with Silas sang praises to God in the Philippian jail after having been stripped and beaten for preaching Christ Jesus.

The psalmist strikes the proper note for Christian living:

" Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And all that is within me, bless his holy name.
Bless the Lord, O my soul,
And forget not all his benefits: . . .
Bless the Lord, all his works,
In all places of his dominion:
Bless the Lord, O my soul." ³⁹

O God, teach us how to thank thee, both with our lips and with our lives.

*"For thine is the kingdom, and the
power, and the glory, for ever.
Amen."*

MATT. 6:13B

CONCLUSION

"Thine Is the Kingdom"

AS THE DOXOLOGY, "FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM, and the power, and the glory, for ever," stands in the Authorized Version, it offers the reason for the petitions preceding it. This liturgical addition to the prayer is in harmony with the New Testament as a whole, and it offers a sound reason for all our praying — the sovereign power and glory of God; we ask him to give us, to forgive us, to lead us, because of his fatherly power and glory. Because of his beneficence and glory, we yearn to see his name hallowed.

It is not easy to see at once why we should pray, "Thy kingdom come," if the Kingdom is already God's. This discrepancy in language is true to a discrepancy in facts. The Kingdom is God's whether men revolt or obey. God has never abdicated, nor surrendered his sovereignty, although, in the world where man lives, the times are frequently out of joint. The

petition, "Thy kingdom come," seeks to make God's will regnant among men.

The Doxology looks beyond our little world of disorder to the real state of the universe. God created man for freedom, but man has assumed that freedom consists in pursuing one's own ends, or whims. The result has been chaos, not freedom. Only as we do his will can we be free. All the interlocking personal relations of the universe must have one directing Head, or else perpetual strife is inevitable. The directing Head is a Father, not a dictator. He rules by love, not force, so sometimes his children play fast and loose with his love. A dictator would execute them; a Father yearns over them and woos them to love him in return.

Events may often shake our faith, but the Doxology reminds us that God rules over events. Cataclysms mark the ends of eras and the beginnings of new ones, but God's sovereignty is not affected by these crises:

"Jehovah sat as King at the Flood;
Yea, Jehovah sitteth as King for ever."¹

In the midst of crises and afflictions, the Christian naturally longs to see God intervene. Out of persecution, the Apocalypticist, with thankful heart, looked

forward to a time when God would take over the control of the world: " We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned." ² We must not ask God to reign over our world unless we are willing for him to reign in our hearts. It is impious to pray, " Thy kingdom come," so that the world may become a softer place for us to live, unless we are willing to do all we can to make it a better place for others to live. That means sacrifice, and it may require a rearrangement of our whole manner of life.

The sin of the world is not an evidence of God's loss of authority; it is evidence of man's revolt. If our thought pattern is, " Not thy will, but mine be done," it will do little good to say, " Thy will be done." God's reign must begin in our minds and in our hearts before it can be realized in our world. We speak of breaking God's laws. We do not break them; we disobey them, and they break us.

God's sovereignty extends to the spiritual world as certainly as it does to the physical. The chief difference lies in the time lag of retribution. If one disobeys the laws of gravity on a precipitous mountain highway, the consequences are immediate, but one may

disobey the laws of the spirit for many years before the results are seen. The garden vegetables reach maturity in a few short weeks; the trees of the forest require centuries. That is why trees are bigger than carrots. The laws of decency may be flouted for years before carnage and tears break forth, but when they do, the end does not come simply as when a speeding motorist plunges into a mountain canyon. The worst that evil men can do never produces a situation so bad that the Christian cannot say, "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth,"³ although he may be constrained to cry, "O Lord, how long?"

The fact of God's sovereignty not only enables us to pray when all things seem to go wrong, but it also obligates us to pray. The deeper the sin and suffering, the greater is the need; the greater the need, the greater is our obligation to intercede. We must not limit our expectation of his grace and power to help.

Prayer to be complete must include adoration of God for his holiness and grace, recognition of the family ties in God's household and the invocation of his blessings upon all his children, submission to his will, confession of our sins, petition for those things that sustain our physical and spiritual life, intercession for the needs of others, and thanksgiving for all his bene-

fits. If any one of these seven elements is missing, our prayer life suffers. We grow in spiritual stature in proportion to the completeness of our prayer life.

We thank thee, O Father, for our assurance of thy power, thy glory, and of thy purpose to establish thy Reign on earth. Enable us to be used in working out thy purpose. Amen.

NOTES

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

- ¹ *Chicago Daily News*, January 4, 1943.
- ² Ps. 107:18, 19.
- ³ Ps. 107:11.
- ⁴ Ps. 107:27, 28.
- ⁵ Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31.
- ⁶ Ps. 107:1.
- ⁷ F. G. Lankard, *Difficulties in Religious Thinking*, 1933, p. 98.
- ⁸ Ps. 109:4b. The italicized words in the Authorized Version are supplied in an effort to make the translation clearer.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

- ¹ Luke 18:11.
- ² I Cor. 13:6.
- ³ II Cor. 13:7-9.
- ⁴ The publican, according to the Greek, said, "To me the sinner." He was concerned with one particular sinner.
- ⁵ Luke 18:13.
- ⁶ I Peter 3:7.
- ⁷ Matt. 5:23, 24.
- ⁸ Isa. 1:11, 15.
- ⁹ Eph. 2:15.
- ¹⁰ Acts 17:26.
- ¹¹ Mark 3:35; Matt. 12:50.

¹² In the Old Testament, there are five Hebrew words that are translated by the English "neighbour."

¹³ Lev. 19:18.

¹⁴ Matt. 5:43, 44.

¹⁵ Matt. 5:21, 27, 31, 33, 38, 43.

¹⁶ Everett Gill, *A. T. Robertson: A Biography*, 1943, p. 178.

¹⁷ Rom. 8:14.

¹⁸ The Greek word means "right" rather than "capacity." By sin we have forfeited all right to be called "sons of God"; through faith in Christ by the grace of God the right is restored. See Luke 15:21 ff.

¹⁹ John 1:12.

²⁰ Matt. 12:50.

²¹ Luke 10:6.

²² John 17:12.

²³ John 8:44.

²⁴ Matt. 5:45.

²⁵ Col. 4:5.

²⁶ I Thess. 4:12.

²⁷ Col. 3:10, 11.

²⁸ John 16:23.

²⁹ F. G. Lankard, *Difficulties in Religious Thinking*, 1933,

p. 80.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

³¹ Matt. 6:7; 23:14.

³² I John 3:1.

³³ Matt. 6:8.

³⁴ Matt. 7:11.

³⁵ Eph. 3:20.

- ³⁶ Luke 15:20-24.
- ³⁷ John 4:23.
- ³⁸ Matt. 22:37-39.
- ³⁹ Matt. 22:40.
- ⁴⁰ Matt. 5:44.
- ⁴¹ Matt. 5:43.
- ⁴² Matt. 5:48.
- ⁴³ Matt. 5:46.
- ⁴⁴ John 15:12.
- ⁴⁵ John 14:15, Revised Version.

NOTES TO CHAPTER II

- ¹ Deut. 23:17, 18.
- ² In the Old Testament, the word "holy" is applied to such things more than 250 times.
- ³ More than 40 times.
- ⁴ Ex. 20:7.
- ⁵ Lev. 11:44, 45; I Peter 1:15-17.
- ⁶ Phil. 3:12.
- ⁷ I John 1:8
- ⁸ Isa. 6:5.
- ⁹ Matt. 9:13. "To repentance" is not in the best MSS. of Matthew; the words crept in here from Luke 5:32.
- ¹⁰ Rom. 10:2, 3.
- ¹¹ Matt. 5:6.
- ¹² Phil. 2:13.
- ¹³ Eph. 4:13.
- ¹⁴ Heb. 12:14.

- ¹⁵ I Thess. 5:23.
¹⁶ Phil. 1:6.
¹⁷ John 10:36.
¹⁸ John 17:18, 19.
¹⁹ Eph. 5:27.
²⁰ Heb. 9:12-14.
²¹ Rom. 8:11.
²² II Thess. 2:13. See also I Peter 1:2.
²³ Ps. 51:10.
²⁴ Heb. 12:14. Translated directly from the Greek.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

- ¹ Rom. 12:19. See Deut. 32:35.
² Rom. 14:4.
³ Rev. Edwin Hatch, 1886.
⁴ John 7:17.
⁵ John 9:31.
⁶ I John 5:14.
⁷ Matt. 7:21.
⁸ Matt. 21:28-32.
⁹ Luke 12:47.
¹⁰ Eph. 6:6, 7. Translated directly from the Greek.
¹¹ I John 2:17.
¹² Col. 1:9, 10. The word translated "knowledge" means "full knowledge."
¹³ Col. 4:12. Translated directly from the Greek.
¹⁴ Acts 16:7, 8.
¹⁵ Rom. 12:1, 2.

- ¹⁶ Heb. 13:21.
- ¹⁷ Matt. 26:42.
- ¹⁸ John 6:38.
- ¹⁹ Heb. 10:7-9.
- ²⁰ Mark 3:20, 21.
- ²¹ John 4:31-34.
- ²² Matt. 6:33.
- ²³ Matt. 5:3.
- ²⁴ Matt. 5:10.
- ²⁵ Matt. 5:20.
- ²⁶ John 3:3, 5.
- ²⁷ Matt. 19:23-25.
- ²⁸ Matt. 21:31.
- ²⁹ Luke 18:9-14.
- ³⁰ Matt. 8:11, 12.
- ³¹ Matt. 11:12.
- ³² Matt. 21:43.
- ³³ Matt. 25:34-40.
- ³⁴ Matt. 9:35; 10:7, 8; Luke 9:2, 11.
- ³⁵ Ps. 2:8, 9.
- ³⁶ Luke 4:18.
- ³⁷ Matt. 13:24; Mark 4:26.
- ³⁸ Matt. 13:31.
- ³⁹ Matt. 13:33.
- ⁴⁰ Luke 10:9-11.
- ⁴¹ Matt. 22:14.
- ⁴² Matt. 13:44.
- ⁴³ Matt. 13:45, 46.
- ⁴⁴ Matt. 25:1-13.

⁴⁵ Matt. 25:14-30.

⁴⁶ Luke 17:20, 21.

⁴⁷ Acts 1:3.

⁴⁸ Acts 1:6.

⁴⁹ Acts 1:7.

⁵⁰ Acts 1:8.

⁵¹ Matt. 18:28-35.

⁵² As Paul used the term "the righteousness of God," it had, at least, four facets. It referred to the righteous character of God, to the character that he required in his people, to the righteousness imputed by grace, and to that imparted by his Spirit. Since God's people were not and could not be completely righteous of their own efforts, he intervened: One who knew no sin was made to be sin that we might become the righteousness of God in him (II Cor. 5:21). On the basis of faith in the redeeming Christ, God, as an act of grace, treated men as though they were righteous (justification) and then began to impart righteousness by the sanctifying work of his Spirit. This act of free grace appears in Jesus' teaching but he does not call it "grace" (Matt. 18:23-35; 20:1-16; et cetera).

⁵³ Rom. 14:17.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

¹ I Cor. 4:7.

² Luke 4:4; Matt. 4:4.

³ Matt. 5:45.

⁴ Matt. 6:8.

⁵ The Greek word means "quit being distracted"; it does not refer to forethought.

⁶ Matt. 6:25, 26.

⁷ Matt. 6:33.

⁸ Matt. 6:7.

⁹ Matt. 23:14; Mark 12:40.

¹⁰ Luke 18:9-14.

¹¹ Matt. 22:37-39.

¹² Matt. 22:40.

¹³ John 3:16.

¹⁴ Col. 2:3.

¹⁵ I John 5:14, 15.

¹⁶ John 16:23.

¹⁷ John 15:7.

¹⁸ II Cor. 5:17.

¹⁹ James 5:16. "The effectual fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much" of the A.V. misses the depth of meaning in this statement. The word translated "effectual" is a participle. In form it is either middle or passive voice. If middle, it would refer to a prayer that one works up in oneself, a sort of autosuggestion. Much praying is like this. If passive, it refers to a prayer wrought within us by some one without us, i.e., a prayer inspired by God. This is undoubtedly in harmony with the whole New Testament viewpoint and with the usage of this word. God implants in the hearts of those who abide in Christ his own desires for his people. When we give voice to these prayers they must get results, because God initiated them.

²⁰ John 15:16.

²¹ James 1:6, 7.

²² Mark 11:24. The A.V. completely misses the point of the tense here.

²³ Mark 9:24.

²⁴ Rom. 8:26. There is no word *for* in the Greek text. Paul wrote, "We do not know what to pray." The "for" crept in, no doubt, because of our strong inclination to think of prayer as primarily asking for something. It is infinitely more than that: It includes praise, adoration, thanksgiving, confession, et cetera.

²⁵ I Cor. 14:14, 15.

²⁶ I Kings 18:26.

²⁷ Matt. 14:23; Mark 6:46.

²⁸ I Kings, chs. 18; 19.

²⁹ Luke 5:16.

³⁰ Luke 6:12-16.

³¹ Matt. 16:8.

³² John 17:9, 15, 20.

³³ Luke 22:31, 32.

³⁴ Matt. 26:36-44.

³⁵ John 19:30.

³⁶ Luke 3:21.

³⁷ Mark 1:35.

³⁸ Luke 18:1.

³⁹ Phil. 1:9-11.

⁴⁰ Eph. 3:16-19.

⁴¹ I Thess. 3:10.

⁴² Rom. 1:9-11.

⁴³ Col. 1:3.

⁴⁴ Eph. 6:19, 20.

⁴⁵ Phil. 4:11, 12.

⁴⁶ Rom. 1:10.

⁴⁷ Matt. 7:7, 8. Translated directly from the Greek.

⁴⁸ Luke 11:11-13.

⁴⁹ James 4:3. Translated directly from the Greek.

⁵⁰ Acts 20:35.

⁵¹ Matt. 10:8.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

¹ Matt. 6:15. Compare Mark 11:25, 26.

² Matt. 18:23-35.

³ Matt. 18:17.

⁴ Rom. 12:18.

⁵ Matt. 5:44.

⁶ II Cor. 5:20.

⁷ Rom. 8:1.

⁸ I John 1:9.

⁹ Col. 2:13.

¹⁰ Matt. 9:2-8; Mark 2:5-12; Luke 5:20-26; James 5:15.

¹¹ Eph. 4:30-32.

¹² Luke 15:28-32.

¹³ Isa. 6:9, 10.

¹⁴ Isa. 1:18.

¹⁵ Isa. 6:11, 12.

¹⁶ Mark 4:12.

¹⁷ Matt. 11:28.

¹⁸ Matt. 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10.

¹⁹ Matt. 12:35.

²⁰ James 3:11.

²¹ Matt. 18:22.

²² Luke 17:3-5.

²³ Matt. 5:21-28.

- ²⁴ Acts 8:22, 23.
²⁵ ἀφίημι.
²⁶ Rom. 4:7. Compare Ps. 32:1, 2.
²⁷ χαρίζομαι.
²⁸ See Luke 7:42, 43.
²⁹ II Cor. 1:12.
³⁰ II Cor. 1:17-20, 23; 2:1-4.
³¹ II Cor. 3:1-3.
³² II Cor. 4:3, 4.
³³ II Cor. 5:13, 14.
³⁴ II Cor. 6:12, 13.
³⁵ II Cor. 8:19-21.
³⁶ II Cor. 10:1-4.
³⁷ II Cor. 10:8.
³⁸ II Cor. 10:10, 11.
³⁹ II Cor. 11:6.
⁴⁰ II Cor. 11:7-10. Compare I Cor., ch. 9.
⁴¹ II Cor. 12:11-14.
⁴² II Cor. 2:5-11.
⁴³ I Tim. 1:13.
⁴⁴ Col. 3:13. Compare Eph. 4:31, 32.
⁴⁵ Gal. 6:1.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

- ¹ Rom. 3:23.
² Matt. 15:14.
³ Rom. 8:14.
⁴ James 1:13-15.

- ⁵ Matt. 4:1.
- ⁶ Acts 9:26.
- ⁷ Acts 16:7.
- ⁸ Acts 24:6.
- ⁹ Acts 26:21. Another form of the same verb.
- ¹⁰ Heb. 11:17.
- ¹¹ Heb. 11:37.
- ¹² Rev. 2:2.
- ¹³ John 6:5, 6.
- ¹⁴ II Cor. 13:5.
- ¹⁵ James 1:17.
- ¹⁶ Matt. 5:45.
- ¹⁷ Matt. 4:6.
- ¹⁸ Matt. 4:7.
- ¹⁹ Matt. 26:41.
- ²⁰ Luke 22:28-30.
- ²¹ James 1:2-4.
- ²² I Peter 1:7.
- ²³ Rom. 5:3-5.
- ²⁴ Rom. 8:28.
- ²⁵ James 1:5.
- ²⁶ Matt. 4:1-11. Compare Luke 4:1-13.
- ²⁷ Matt. 16:1; 19:3; 22:18, 35; Mark 8:11; 10:2; 12:15; Luke 11:16.
- ²⁸ Heb. 2:10, 11.
- ²⁹ Heb. 4:15.
- ³⁰ I Peter 4:12.
- ³¹ Heb. 2:18; 4:16.
- ³² II Peter 2:9.

- ³³ II Peter 2:22.
- ³⁴ The Greek word for "a way to escape" means an exit.
- ³⁵ I Cor. 10:13.
- ³⁶ Phil. 2:11.
- ³⁷ Luke 1:74.
- ³⁸ Col. 1:13.
- ³⁹ Rom. 7:24.
- ⁴⁰ I Thess. 1:10.
- ⁴¹ II Thess. 3:2.
- ⁴² Rom. 15:31.
- ⁴³ Acts, ch. 22.
- ⁴⁴ II Tim. 3:11.
- ⁴⁵ II Tim. 4:17, 18.
- ⁴⁶ II Cor. 1:8-10.
- ⁴⁷ II Cor. 12:9, 10.
- ⁴⁸ Rom. 15:23.
- ⁴⁹ Col. 1:13.
- ⁵⁰ Col. 1:12

NOTES TO CHAPTER VII

- ¹ Phil. 4:19.
- ² Luke 12:4.
- ³ W. D. Chamberlain, *The Meaning of Repentance*, 1943.
- ⁴ Luke 15:6, 9.
- ⁵ John 15:13.
- ⁶ James 4:4.
- ⁷ Matt. 12:30.
- ⁸ John 15:14.

⁹ The reader must not think of three modern loaves of bread, but of three small flat cakes, not more than one hungry man needed.

¹⁰ John 14:16.

¹¹ Eph. 3:14-19.

¹² See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros*.

¹³ Col. 1:9, 10.

¹⁴ II Thess. 1:11.

¹⁵ II Thess. 1:12.

¹⁶ II Thess. 3:1.

¹⁷ Col. 4:3.

¹⁸ I Cor. 4:11.

¹⁹ Phil. 4:11, 12.

²⁰ I Cor. 9:1-18.

²¹ Acts 8:24.

²² Luke 16:24.

²³ I John 5:16.

²⁴ Acts 9:26-28.

²⁵ Rom. 11:2-4; I Sam. 12:22.

²⁶ Rom. 8:26.

²⁷ Rom. 8:34.

²⁸ Heb. 7:25.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VIII

¹ Matt. 15:36; 26:27; Mark 8:6; 14:23; Luke 22:17, 19; John 6:11, 23.

² Acts 27:35.

³ Matt. 9:13; Luke 5:32.

- ⁴ Matt. 11:25.
- ⁵ Matt. 11:26.
- ⁶ I Cor. 1:20, 21. Translated directly from the Greek.
- ⁷ Rom. 10:2.
- ⁸ John 11:41, 42.
- ⁹ Luke 18:18, 19.
- ¹⁰ Acts 5:41.
- ¹¹ Acts 28:15.
- ¹² Rom. 15:30, 31.
- ¹³ Acts, ch. 22.
- ¹⁴ Acts 28:3-6.
- ¹⁵ See Rom. 1:16.
- ¹⁶ I Thess. 2:13.
- ¹⁷ I Thess. 1:2, 3.
- ¹⁸ II Thess. 1:3, 4; 2:13.
- ¹⁹ I Cor. 1:4, 5.
- ²⁰ I Cor. 8:1.
- ²¹ See especially I Cor., chs. 12; 14.
- ²² See I Cor., chs. 6; 11.
- ²³ Rom. 16:4.
- ²⁴ Phil. 1:3, 4.
- ²⁵ Col. 1:3.
- ²⁶ Eph. 1:16.
- ²⁷ Philemon 3, 4.
- ²⁸ Rom. 7:24.
- ²⁹ Rom. 7:25.
- ³⁰ I Cor. 1:14, 15.
- ³¹ Rom. 1:21, 22.
- ³² Rom. 1:23-32.

³³ *Yadab*.

³⁴ Ps. 106:1. Compare Ps. 107:1; 118:1, 29; 136:1; etc.

³⁵ Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31.

³⁶ Luke 1:46-55.

³⁷ E. O. Excell.

³⁸ Phil. 4:4. Translated directly from the Greek.

³⁹ Ps. 103:1, 2, 22.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

¹ Ps. 29:10. The Authorized Version missed the meaning of the tense in the first line, so this quotation is taken from the American Standard Version.

² Rev. 11:17.

³ Rev. 19:6.